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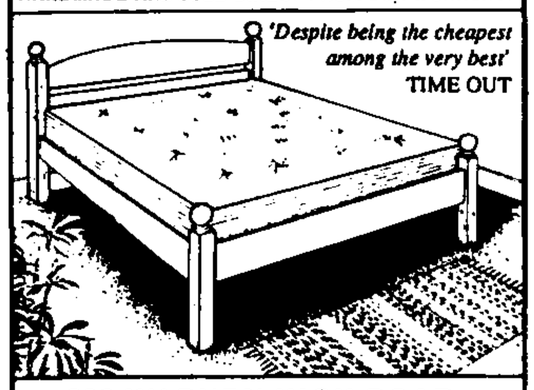

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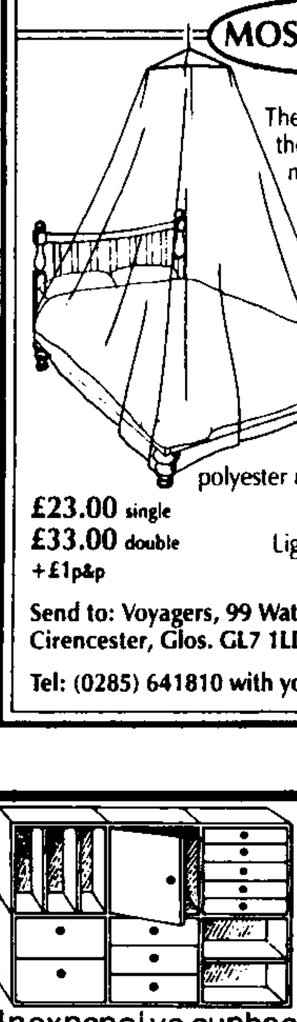

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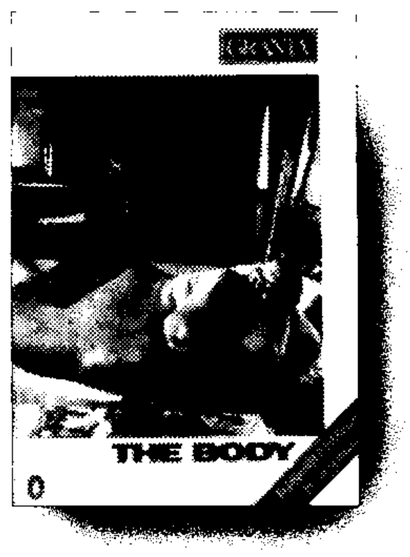

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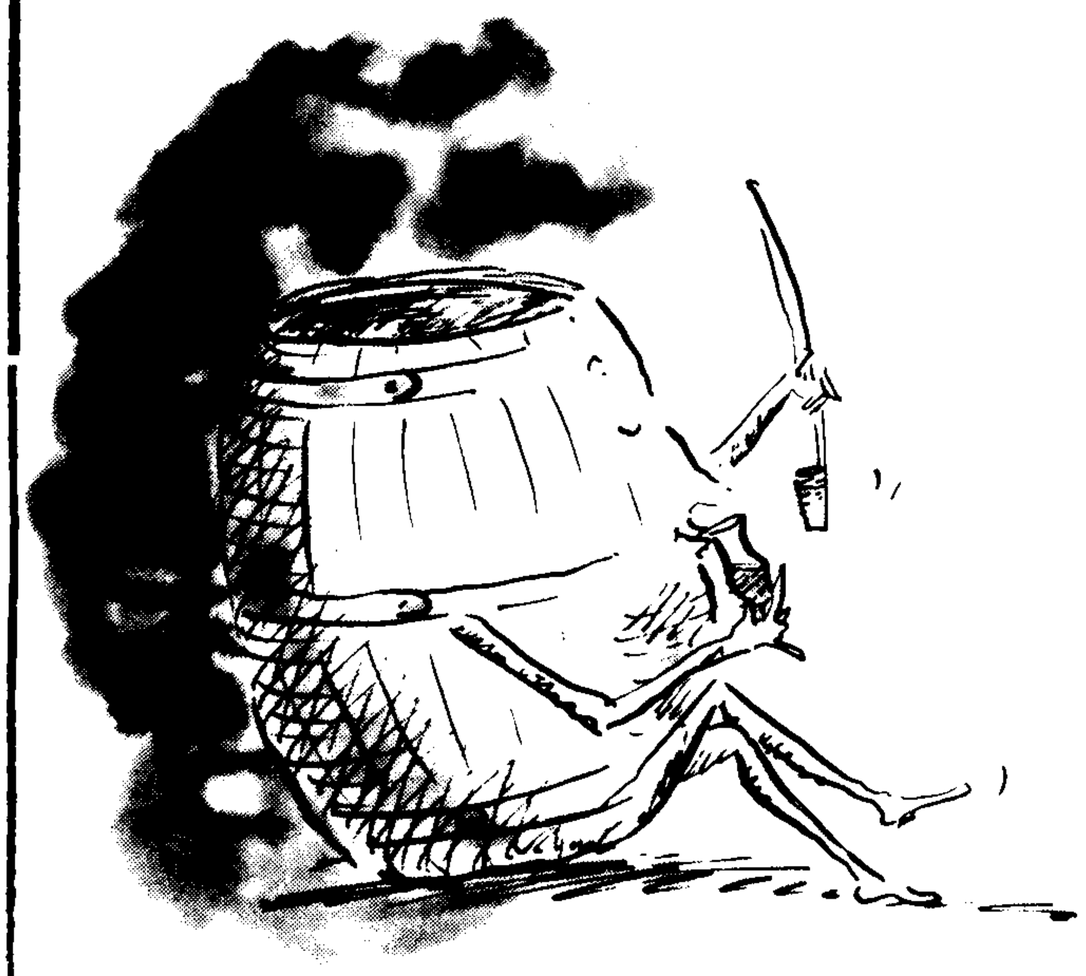

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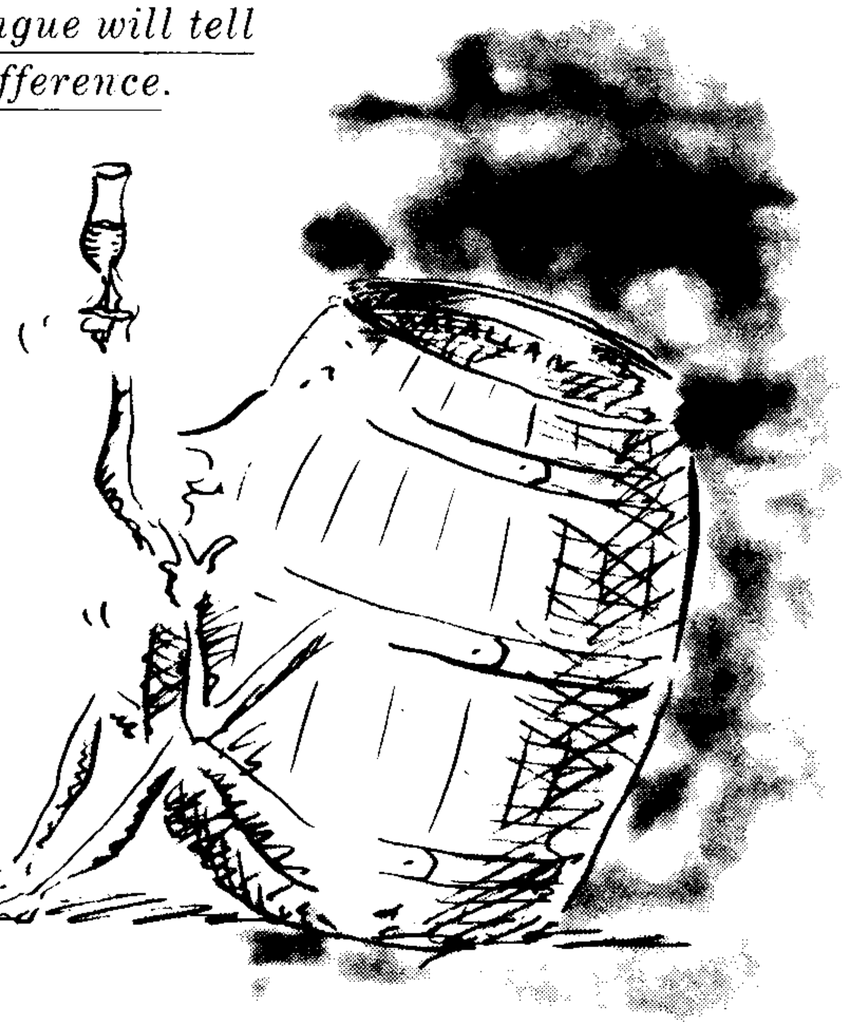

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THOUGH many in the financial community are expressing shock at the continuing revelations about the late Robert Maxwell, I am not in the least bit surprised.

I always knew that Maxwell was up to no good. I did not like the cut of his jib and was convinced that he was not a man to be trusted. In fact I would go so far as to say it was obvious to me from the very beginning of his career that the man was an out and out crook.

That is why I decided that he needed to be watched closely:— preferably from inside his own organization. This is the reason I sat on the board of all his main companies, advised him on all his major share deals, lent him £1,000 million from the Gnome Bank and went to all his parties at Headington Hall.

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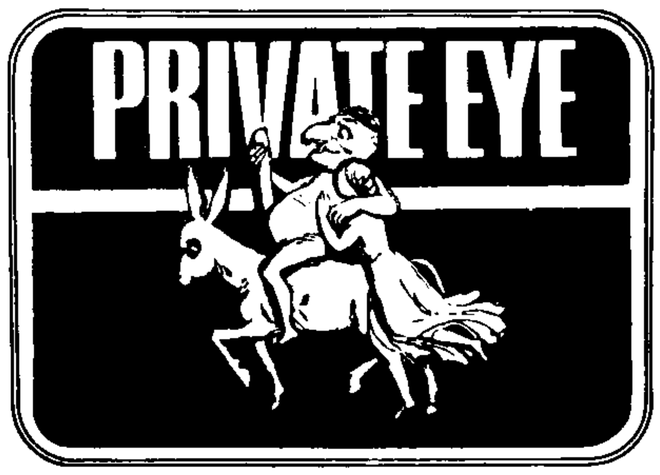


COLOUR SECTION

WHAT WILL happen to Donald Higgs, elderly and retired former principal scientific officer at the Royal Armament Research and Disarmament Establishment (RARDE)? Indeed, what will happen to RARDE itself?

Both came in for a hammering at the court of appeal in the recent Judith Ward case. "Conviction by ambush" was the phrase of Lord Justice Glidewell as he laid into the evidence of RARDE and Higgs that had convicted the innocent Miss Ward of motorway bombings nearly 20 years ago.

Higgs has a lot on his conscience. Not only is he at least partly responsible for the 18 years Judith Ward spent in prison, but he must add ten years each for Patrick and Annie Maguire, a respectable couple from west London who were convicted of "harbouring explosives" solely on Higgs's evidence that they and their family had nitroglycerine on their hands.

Several members of the Maguire family and circle were convicted on the same evidence and sentenced to shorter terms. Guisseppe Conlon, a friend of the Maguires who visited them on the day of the police raid, did not serve his whole sentence. He died in prison protesting his innocence.

Here is Higgs addressing the court in the Maguire trial on his beloved "thin layer chromotography" test by which he could "prove" that the Maguires had been handling explosives. "I seek to establish that the TLC test is infallible and I believe it to be. I think we have now reached the point at which we have tested enough by TLC to exclude other substances. In a purely scientific sense the chances of a rogue elephant turning up are one in 10,000. In the real world they are a million to one."

There was some evidence to contradict this fanatical certainty. It came from Higgs's predecessor as principal officer at RARDE, Mr John Yallop. Yallop invented the TLC test, but when he started testing it on non-explosive substances before the Maguire trial he was disturbed that the tests reacted positively to some of them. Even cigarettes yielded the tell-tale pink spots.

John Yallop was pooh-poohed by the then attorney-general, the late Lord Havers, as a turncoat and a retired man who was dabbling in excessive experimentation. The man who mattered was the current top dog — Donald Higgs. The court agreed and the savage sentences were passed. There the matter would have rested had it not been for the release campaigns which have only recently been successful in the courts.

The Maguire case was examined in detail by a committee of inquiry under Mr Justice May which reported last year. The committee could not order witnesses to attend. Mr Higgs testified voluntarily. When he was rigorously cross-examined by the Maguires' barrister on the TLC tests, he got tetchy and threatened to walk out. The May Committee was disturbed by the increasing evidence that the TLC test was a lot of rubbish, and recommended that the Maguire convictions be quashed. But that was only possible at the court of appeal.

When the case came there last summer, the appeal court judges, greatly disturbed by the freeing of the Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six, decided to make a stand. In an astonishing judgment, the three judges, Lords Justices McCowan, Stuart-Smith and Mann, refused to criticise the scientific evidence at the Maguires' trial and insisted that there had been explosives on their hands. They quashed the Maguire convictions on one ground alone. As Lord Justice McCowan put it: "On the ground that the possibility of innocent contamination cannot be excluded and on this ground alone, we think the convictions are unsafe and unsatisfactory." The suggestion was that bombers had been in the Maguire house and had wiped their hands on a towel, which passed on the explosive traces to the Maguires.

For this grotesque conclusion there was not a shred of evidence — no towel, for example. The judgment was greeted with fury by the Maguires who had insisted from the outset that they had nothing to do with the IRA and there had never been a trace of explosives in their house.

The three judges have now been blown to pieces by the further evidence collected by the defence of Judith Ward. Consistent demands of the Home Office and RARDE (all bitterly resisted at every stage of discovery) have released a series of TLC tests carried out well before the Ward case, the Maguire case or the Birmingham case which make nonsense of Higgs's claim of "infallibility".

The tests showed, for instance, that in some cases the tests would respond positively to boot polish or soap. Higgs was exposed and the Glidewell judgment, in ferocious terms, shifted the blame for the injustice to Judith Ward on to the shoulders of the infallible Higgs. He had lied in court, it was said, and committed perjury. But will he be prosecuted? Almost certainly not: almost certainly, the DPP will "draw a line" under the whole range of injustices stemming from bogus forensics at RARDE and other government establishments. Why?

But if Higgs did stand trial for perjury and deception, how could one ignore the complicity of the judges? In all these cases, theu went out of their way to support government scientists and ridicule anyone who tried to suggest that their tests were rubbish. Higgs is retired and discredited, but the judges remain at the head of the judiciary.

Lord Justice Bridge, who rubbished the defence scientist in the Birmingham Six case, is now the senior appeal judge; McCowan, Stuart-Smith and Mann are mighty pillars of the same court. More seriously, the judge who went out of his way to rubbish the defence scientists in the Maguire case — who specifically backed Higgs against his former colleague — is Lord Justice Donaldson, Master of the Rolls. And a junior prosecutor of Ward who doesn't seem to have doubted the bogus forensics for a moment is now the Lord Chief Justice.

Statement: Mr Ian Hay Davison

IN OUR issue of 5 June 1992, due to an error in our transcription of a Channel 4 programme, a remark was erroneously attributed to Mr Davison which imputed that he was a member of a "baby syndicate" at Lloyd's as an underwriter and had joined the syndicate as he had thought it might lead to a lifetime of profits. The statement attributed to him should have referred to Mr Ian Posgate and Mr Davison is not, and never has been, a member of any syndicate at Lloyd's.

Mr Davison, former senior partner of City chartered accountants Arthur Andersen & Co, was for three years deputy chairman and chief executive of Lloyd's and in fact appeared on the Channel 4 programme as a critic of corruption and malpractice in Lloyd's.

We very much regret this transcription error and wish to take this opportunity unreservedly of apologising to him for this very serious mistake and for the embarrassment and annoyance caused to him.

WHY DID Fleet Street go into such a royal feeding frenzy last week? The editors' explanation — as peddled by Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill, Stewart Steven and others — was that it was a story of great constitutional significance which, however reluctantly, the Fourth Estate had a duty to cover. A more realistic answer is to be found in the latest ABC circulation figures.

Sales of national newspapers have continued to fall in recent months — and here was a chance to buck the trend. The *Sunset Times* sold more than 200,000 extra copies in its first week of serialising Andrew Morton's book. Other nationals — regardless of whether they had anything new to report — enjoyed a bumper payday as well.

There was particular rejoicing at the *Daily Mail*. The paper had originally been keen to buy the serial rights to *Diana: Her True Story*, and was mortified when its bid of £200,000 was overtaken by the *Sunday Times*'s £250,000. (What made it all the more galling was that the negotiator from the *Sunset Times* was Sue Douglas, a former assistant editor of the *Daily Mail*, who has been at loggerheads with her old colleagues since decamping to Wapping last year.) But Sir David Fester didn't get where he is today by taking defeat lying down. He set about getting a "spoiler".

While bidding for the Morton book, the *Mail* had been allowed to see the manuscript — on condition that it signed a legal agreement promising not to divulge any of the contents. If it simply ran a front-page story claiming that Princess Di had tried to kill herself, it could be successfully sued by Morton and his publishers. The story had to look as if it came from someone else.

Step forward Don Short, a partner in a London agency called Solo. Short has a close relationship with the *Daily Mail*, since he is responsible for syndicating *Mail* articles to foreign newspapers. But he is also the literary agent for Nicholas "Sneaky" Davies, the former foreign editor of the *Mirror* who was sacked by Maxwell after being exposed as a liar in — as coincidence would have it — the *Daily Mail*.

Davies, who has been unemployed since his nemesis last October, was cobbling together a book about the Prince of Wales for an American firm called Carol Publishing. Short had a brainwave. Why didn't the *Mail* buy serial rights in Davies's (as yet unfinished) work and "tickle it up" a bit?

And so it came to pass. Davies was paid a mere £5,000, a paltry sum if his "revelations" were really as sensational as the *Mail* later tried to pretend. But as all concerned knew, the Davies book was a fig-leaf.

The *Mail*'s series began on Friday 5 June, two days before the *Sunday Times* was due to fire its first salvo. It was promoted with TV commercials in which Nigel Dempster promised stories: "from the heart of Kensington Palace" — though he was in fact standing outside Buckingham Palace at the time. For the next day or so, Dumpster was almost as ubiquitous on television and radio as Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill.

This was a further deception. For although the paper's week-long series — "Diana: The Happiness Behind the Smile" — was billed in large type as being "edited by Nigel Dempster", hardly a word of it was written by the ex-GLE. Nor, one need hardly add, did much of it come from Nick Davies's negligible book. The true authors of the bogus "serialisation" were *Mail* hacks Geoffrey Levy and Richard Kay.

For the first few days, the articles carried a small footnote: "Adapted from *Diana. A Princess and Her Troubled Marriage*, by Nicholas Davies, to be published in July by Carol Publishing, New York." But by last Wednesday even this pretence had been dropped. Still, "Sneaky" Davies had served his purpose. For an investment of a mere £5,000, the *Mail* managed to raise its circulation by over 100,000.

Purely in the public interest, of course...

JOCELYN "Miss" Targett, the *Grauniad*'s excitable young arts editor, is in trouble again.

Last Tuesday he devoted much of his arts page to an article on the all-important subject of men's foreskins, illustrated with a large Robert Mapplethorpe photograph of a penis. Production staff who had to lay out the page were shocked at this descent into porn and protested to Peter Preston, the *Grauniad*'s editor. Preston agreed with them, and in later editions the genitalia was replaced with a feature about South African music.

Undaunted, Targett is planning further upheavals. Having already sacked the *Grauniad*'s respected second-string movie critic, Tim Pulleine, he is now trying to squeeze out the paper's veteran film writer Derek Malcolm, apparently because he thinks Malcolm's appraisals of Hollywood blockbusters like *Terminator 2* and *Wayne's World* are too "negative".

His latest proposal is that Malcolm should deal with arty European films, leaving the biggies to be reviewed by Toby "Toyboy" Young, the editor of Julie Burchill's moronic *Modern Review*. When Targett put this suggestion to Malcolm the other day, the reaction was very "negative" indeed.

HACKS at the *Indescribablyboring* and the *Sindie* are puzzling over the papers' new "style-book", issued by Andreas Whittam Strobes last week.

The book commences with a fierce warning: "Blasphemies against major world religions offend many people and lose us readers." Has Strobes already forgotten, the hacks wonder, that the very first issue of the *Sindie* printed a huge article by Salman Rushdie on the *fatwa*?

Odder still are the rules on foreign words. In the past, the *Indie* was meticulous in its use of correct accents — making clear, for instance, the distinction between the Italian word *e* ("and") and *è* ("is"). But no more. "French and German are the only foreign languages with which the average educated British reader is familiar enough to make the absence of diacritical marks a problem," the style-book announces. "So we use French accents and the German umlaut... but no accents in any other language." This is a snub to the bosses of Italy's *La Repubblica* and Spain's *El Pais*, the biggest two shareholders in the *Indie*. The Italians and Spaniards who sit on the *Indie*'s board — Messrs Carlo Caracciolo, Corrado Passera, Juan Cebrian and Javier Diez de Polanco — are unlikely to be amused.

And so to sex, one of the favourite subjects of the *Indie*'s features pages. "To have sex means to be male or female," the oracle pronounces primly. "The act is sexual intercourse, which may be heterosexual intercourse, homosexual intercourse, or whatever." *Whatever*?

TREVOR GROVE, editor of the *Sunday Torygraph*, emitted a scream when he realised that two confidential letters he had written had mistakenly found their way into the hacks' computer files.

The first, addressed to *Daily Torygraph* editor Max "Hitler" Hastings, was rather petulant in tone. "Could I please have some information and decisions regarding the *Sunday Telegraph*?" Grove whined to his *Obergruppenfuhrer*. "I realise the flotation is preoccupying everyone, but it would be courteous if I could at least have a proper reply to my last memo..." Otherwise the memo trumpets his achievements in "giving the paper a more popular tone" — exciting breakthroughs like putting the weather in colour.

The second letter was far more important: it was to Grove's gardener, Kevin Hargreaves, and the tone was seriously petulant. It appears Kevin has not been turning up to give "tender loving care" to the garden at the Groves's Highgate abode.

"Let me say first how much we adore the garden you made for us, and how often it is admired by visitors," Grove writes. However, he goes on to complain about Kevin's absences and his failure to answer phone messages: "We don't know whether to mow the lawn ourselves, buy bedding plants ourselves... Likewise, yesterday I would have trimmed the front hedge myself, except that you have apparently borrowed my shears..."

This entertaining correspondence has provoked one *Sunday Torygraph* hack to pen an anonymous parody of George and Weedon Grossmith's *The Diary of a Nobody*, with Trev and Valerie Grove in the roles of Mr and Mrs Pooter.

RETIRED hack Roy Greenslade recently played a mean trick on Stalinist harpy Julie Burchill, drivellish columnist of the *Mail on Sunday*.

He spied La Burchill pushing a trolley in a supermarket and approached her with a mock air of obsequiousness. She evidently failed to recognise the ex-editor of the *Daily Mirror*, which suited his purpose perfectly. He explained that he was a reader of the *MoS* and a great admirer of her outspoken column — indeed, he stated in no uncertain terms that she was probably the greatest columnist in the history of journalism. She evinced squeaky appreciation of his complimentary effusions.

A few days later, Greenslade bumped into La Burchill's mentor, Sue Douglas, now an executive at the *Sunday Times*. Douglas told him that Julie was in seventh heaven because she had met a fan of her column in a supermarket. Greenslade, who actually has a low opinion of La Burchill's work, sniggered inwardly.

Meanwhile, the *Eye* has noticed that the £90,000-a-year columnist has become rather impoverished in her supply of telling similes. Here is Julie on tourists, from the Summer 1991 edition of *Arena*:

"I can no more call them 'travellers' than I can call napkins 'serviettes' or porn 'erotica'; it's just such a nerdy, piss-elegant-pauvre, *non-U* word..."

In the 9 February edition of the *Mail on Sunday*, Julie lambasted Paddy Ashdown for the "unbearably trashy" mistake of sleeping with his secretary: "Is it possible to do anything, even call a napkin a serviette or call pornography erotica, which so reveals one to be a suburban nerd?"

More recently, in the 21 March edition of *The Spectator*, Julie was reviewing Shirley Conran's latest book, *Crimson*. Blockbusters are best when "lowdown, dirty and honest", but "when they go in for fine writing... they are risible, like calling a napkin a serviette, or pornography 'erotica'."

To consider Julie Burchill a literary genius, as do Toby "Toyboy" Young *et al* at *The Modern Review*, is like... er... calling a napkin a serviette or pornography erotica.

ROBERT ROBISON, who worked for the Joint Intelligence Committee, tells newspapers that clandestine eavesdroppers GCHQ and SIGINT were tracking Robert Maxwell and tapping his faxes and phones way back in 1989.

If so, why should they have stopped doing so in that year? Maxwell's finances started their steep drop to disaster the following year and, no doubt, the tapping and surveillance continued.

Robison says that some reports of Maxwell's activities went to the prime minister. Under Thatcher, no doubt, they were disregarded, for Thatcher and Maxwell *had a mutual* respect for one another's devotion to free enterprise. But what if the surveillance and the reports to Downing Street continued into 1990 and 1991, when Maxwell for the first time started seriously looting his pension funds?

The prime minister then was nice Mr Major. Could that be the same nice Mr Major who, when Maxwell died, led off the chorus of brown-nosing tributes to the Cap'n with a glowing appreciation of the old crook?

NEW MPs are getting down to the real business of British politics — picking up fat parliamentary consultancies and outside directorships — with even more secrecy than usual.

Even though the election was more than two months ago, the new register of members' interests is still being withheld from public inspection. The lame excuse is that the new select committee on members' interests has not yet been constituted and so cannot open the register to public scrutiny. As the new select committees will not be appointed until after next month's shadow cabinet poll, this secrecy in nice Mr Major's new "open government" could continue until November when the Commons reconvenes — a full seven months after polling day.

In the meantime, our distinguished public servants will grab whatever lucrative outside jobs are going, without the inconvenience of their constituents finding out.

For anyone to reproduce declarations of MPs' commercial interests would be a grave parliamentary offence. So it would be very irresponsible for Backbiter to publish the fact that Angela Browning, a new Tory MP, has just been appointed by the Institute of Sales and Marketing Management (ISMM) as its "parliamentary adviser". Her brief is to persuade the Government "to remove the obstacles preventing professional salespeople from making their full contribution to the economic recovery".

The ISSM clearly has its priorities sorted out. Browning has been asked to lobby on the two big obstacles that are holding back Great Britain plc from inevitable economic revival — taxation on company cars and mobile telephones.

WHILE THE new boys and girls line their pockets, spare a thought for all those who were booted out at the election — men like John Hughes, former Labour member for Coventry North-east.

Hughes, a crusty old-school tankie, had been deselected by the new streamline Labour Party which controls Britain's most historic city, but he refused to accept his removal and, like a handful of former parliamentary colleagues, stood against the official candidate, in this case Coventry council finance chair Bob "Boring" Ainsworth.

Hughes was soundly beaten, but has perhaps more reason than most to feel aggrieved. An investigation into the Coventry north-east deselection procedure found that Labour had been rather too zealous in extending the franchise to the less-privileged. An ex-member, dead for four years, had miraculously managed to submit a vote.

Allegations by Hughes's supporters that widespread ballot-fixing had taken place were brushed aside. Although an inquiry by Inspector Knacker uncovered a number of postal votes made out in the same handwriting and on different sizes of paper, no charges were brought — political parties can conduct their affairs in any manner they choose, so long as it is approved by members, dead or alive, it seems.

Regular followers of crooked Coventry will recall that in the city's south-east seat the postal ballot to replace Dave Nellist ended in farce with more than 50 members voting for the proscribed Spart. Indeed, so many spoiled their voting papers in support of Nellist that Labour should have declared the ballot void. Unfortunately, the general election was only a few weeks away.

Meanwhile Hughes faces a £200,000 legal bill and certain bankruptcy if he continues his solitary fight. No prominent local Labour member will dare speak out in favour of him thanks to the city's powerful Indian godfathers who run the Coventry branches and "translate" party business to the mass, non-English speaking membership.

WITH THE seats round the Rio conference table barely cold, true to form the British Government is dragging its feet over renewable energy at home.

Many of Britain's most distinguished scientists have been left twiddling their thumbs waiting to be told whether Tim Eggar, the new energy minister, wants them to complete the work on renewable energy that they started last summer when Colin Moynihan was minister,

No less distinguished a figure than the Astronomer Royal, Professor Arnold Wolfendale, even left Durham, where he is professor of physics, for a committee meeting in London only to discover that it had been cancelled.

He wrote to Michael Heseltine, who as president of the board of trade now oversees energy. After a long delay he "eventually had a reply from Tim Eggar and he said essentially that they were thinking about it. I think that the nation deserves better than just to have the matter shelved."

Sooner of later, Mr Eggar may deign to reinvite the scientists, who include Professor Sir Herman Bondi, fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge, and Professor Peter Oppenheimer, student (ie fellow) of Christ Church, Oxford. In the meantime, MPs continue to sign the motion demanding the reestablishment of the select committee on energy, the signatories having more than doubled from 24 to 58 — and rising.

STUCK with the inane decision to privatise the railways, the Government is steeling itself to publish its nonsensical white paper before the summer recess.

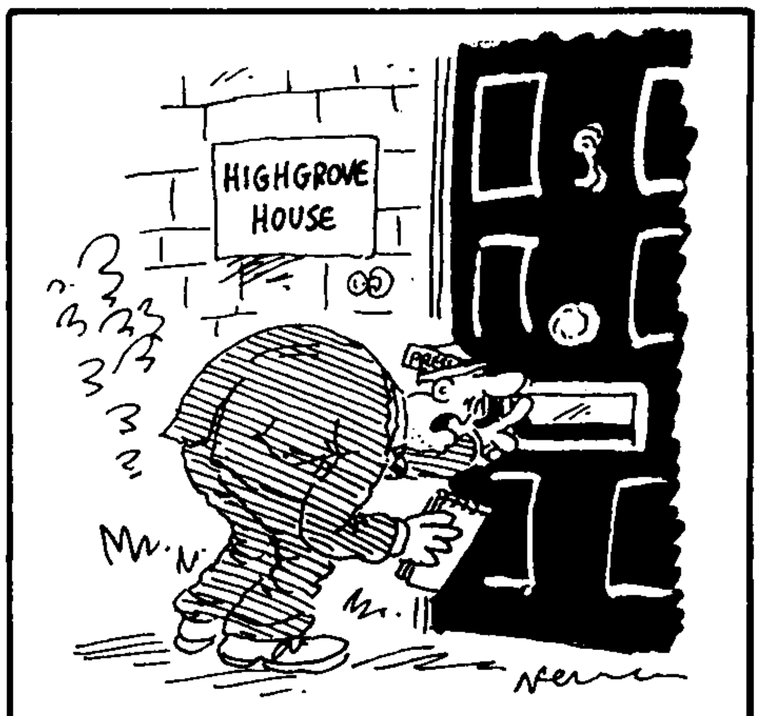
There is one very good reason why rail privatisation will fail: unlike all other privatisations, there is no money in it. Even if the railways were given away, Richard Branson and whoever else chooses to receive them will have to find too much new capital to earn a worthwhile return.

This all dates back to the day three years ago when that most overrated Thatcherite Michael Portillo (sidekick to Cecil Parkinson at transport) conceived the brilliant idea of offering Trafalgar House the chance to build the new channel tunnel rail link.

They returned the offer, with a request for a £1,000 million subsidy. Portillo was stunned, but moved on to another job. But now that he is chief secretary at the treasury, rail privatisation has returned to haunt him because there is no money in it.

In fact the unpleasant task of telling Parliament that rail privatisation will be purely symbolic will fall to transport minister John "Brunel" MacGregor. The only real decision to take is whether to allow the few profitable routes (like the Gatwick express) to be thrown to the Bransons. When the Gatwick give-away was last mooted (in 1989), it was vetoed by Portillo's predecessor and present boss, Norman Lamont, as being against the public interest. After 4 Tory general election wins, who cares about public interest any more?

'Backbiter'



"Do you think this'll mean a privacy bill?"

THE NEW GIRLS (2)

Angela Eagle

ANGELA EAGLE, who convincingly defeated former overseas aid minister Lynda Chalker at Wallasey, has climbed high up the Labour establishment ladder for someone aged thirty.

Apart from a period working for the CBI, which she omitted to mention on her "have constituency will travel" CV (*Eye* 790), Eagle has spent most of her working life as an official for the health union, COHSE.

In 1990 she cowrote a Fabian society pamphlet, *Quotas Now*, which called on Labour to retire MPs aged over 65 and impose all-women shortlists in safe Labour seats. Her track record since then has confirmed her dislike for time consuming democratic processes within the peoples' party.

In a contribution to last month's *Tribune*, Eagle commented favourably on the Tories' quick dispatching of Thatch, "wittily" proposing a "penalty shoot-out" to decide Labour's own leadership contest and denouncing "perpetual ballots". "It would be cheaper to hire Wembley stadium than conduct postal ballots in the trade unions," the ambitious young thing opined.

Eagle of course is an expert on circumventing party democracy, since she herself was imposed on Wallasey Labour Party by the NEC. Walworth Road excluded Wallasey's favourite son — Lol "The Duffer" Duffy — from the selection because he was a socialist. Even so, the local party sent back 163 blank papers (effectively votes for Duffer) as against 57 actual votes for Eagle.

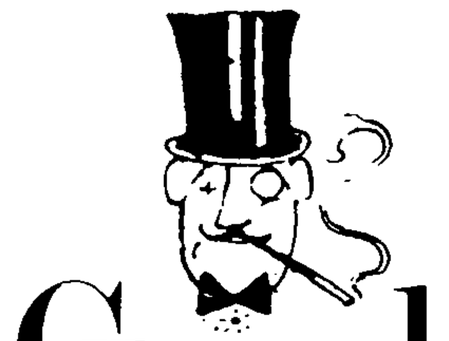
A few weeks prior to this, when Fattersley chaired a committee to determine who was "suitable" for inclusion on the Wallasey shortlist, Eagle surprised all the other potential candidates by seeming to know everyone from Walworth Road. She behaved very much like a person who knew the job was in the bag before the interview, and that the other suckers were just there to make up the numbers.

Much was made during the election campaign of Eagle's twin sister Maria, who was standing in Crosby, another Murkeyside seat. What voters were not told, however, was that both sisters have an aunt called Joyce Gould, who happens to be Labour's director of "organisation".

Gould has been instrumental in rooting out lefties in the party, especially when she was North West regional organiser. She sat on the committee which determined the Wallasey shortlist — with no powers to vote, but allowed to ask questions.Nobody is suggesting for one minute that there is any nepotism in the new model Labour Party. After all, as auntie said, Angela was the best girl for the job!

Eagle has also been getting on famously well with "Flakey" Frank Field, who is greatly relieved that she, rather than the troublesome Duffer, is his adjoining parliamentary colleague. They both provided a laughable photo opportunity during the recent rainy weather by posing together holding silly coloured umbrellas which looked like they'd just left the set of the cult TV series *The Prisoner*.

Feminist Angela makes a strange political bedfellow here. Frankie is anti-abortion and on the right of the General Synod — opposed to women priests. But he's in favour of imposing women candidates for parliament — provided they're not socialists of course!



Grovel

THE LADY "with the well-spoken voice" who tipped off royal snappers that Princess Di was about to visit Carolyn Bartholomew was not, of course, Mrs Bartholomew herself, I can reveal, nor indeed was it a close friend of hers as some newspapers have speculated

Mrs Bartholomew rang Andrew Morton, author of *Princess Diana: Her Inside Story*, to tell him that the princess was about to visit her home in Fulham.

Some snappers did receive tip-off calls from a posh-sounding female, but others, notably Ashley Walton and Ken Lennox, were telephoned at home by a man with a strong Leeds accent. It can only be a coincidence that Andrew Morton comes from Leeds and that his wife Lyn is well-spoken.

WITH THE announcement in the latest honours list of a working peerage for Jeffrey Archer, I can report that the novelist has been exercising his fictive talents as a member of the Distinguished Conduct Medal League.

The League is a registered war charity and membership is reserved for winners of the combat medal or their offspring, who can become associate members. Over the years, various profiles of Archole have proclaimed that his father, William Archer, was a sergeant in the Somerset Light Infantry during World War One and that he received a DCM. But in 1987 it was discovered that the holder of the DCM was in fact another William Archer. The regimental secretary, Lt Col Ronald Woodhouse, told a *Daily Mail* hack: "I am positive now that Sgt Archer is in no way related to Jeffrey Archer, the author and politician."

That might have been an end of the matter, but for the fact that a senior member of the DCM League approached Archole at a function a couple of years later and asked him whether his father was the William Archer DCM. Archole did not deny that his father was the man in question, but replied: "How did you know? I never talk about my father and the DCM." As a result, Archole was invited to join the DCM League as an associate member in the autumn of 1990, which he did willingly.

There can only be two possible explanations for this. Either Archole's father led his son to believe that he had won a DCM, or Archole himself has been up to what his wife once called his gift for précis. However, since the league has discovered the truth, its senior members are at a loss as to whether they should confront Archole or simply let the matter rest. Genuine recipients of this honour are indignant that they should have a bogus associate member in their midst and some have threatened to resign over the issue.

● *I DON'T KNOW what effect Barbara Mills, the director of public prosecutions, has on criminals, but by God she frightens the massed ranks of men at the Garrick Club.*

They see her as a symbol of what they will have in their midst should women be allowed to become members. The club's annual general meeting on 6 July, when the resolution to admit women will be debated, promises to be fierce indeed. If the feminists lose, they will be faced with another resolution forbidding the dreadful subject to be raised again for at least 5 years.

THE COLLAPSE of Canary Wharf is bad news for many, but particularly Sir Tim Bell, hype merchant extraordinaire and big chum of the Thatchers.

His firm, Lowe Bell, which had the PR contract for the great white elephant devlopment, was quickly terminated by the Olympia and York administrators. Although the contract had already been cut from £600,000 a year to a modest £300,000, Bell will still feel the loss.

His overworked and underpaid staff, however, may breath a sigh of relief. The secretive Reichman brothers told their people very little and Lowe Bell were often asked to comment on press releases from Toronto before they had even been informed of developments by the brothers.

● *READERS of the Observer Magazine might have been a little perplexed to see the gluttonous Paul Levy devoting a recent restaurant column to what I am reliably informed is a mediocre eaterie in Bombay.*

It was, of course, entirely coincidental that the restaurant is owned by the Taj group of hotels, which had provided Levy with luxury accommodation while he was in India. It was also a coincidence that a week later Levy was reviewing a London restaurant called Chutney Mary's, which is owned by a member of the family which owns the Taj hotels group.

Unfortunately for the Taj group, Levy has been sacked in Donald "Busy" Trelford's night of the long knives.

I HEAR that a nasty lawsuit is about to unfold for our entertainment in the high court. It involves Nigel Coyne, formerly the senior barristers' clerk at 9 King's Bench Walk where "Gunner" Ashe Lincoln QC is head of chambers.

Coyne is suing all 20 barristers in the chambers for unfair dismissal (which, since the senior clerk earns a percentage of the total fees brought in by the briefs on a contractual basis, has costly implications).

The background to his dismissal, a fact which is admitted to be common ground evidentially, is that Coyne, who is married to the sister of one of his junior clerks, had been having an affair with a junior barrister in the chambers, Rebecca Littlewood.

Senior Chancery judges are apparently fighting among themselves for the privilege of adjudicating in this matter, with Mr Justice "Boot Boy" Harman the favourite.

"Aye, Jim Lad, we'll syphon the booty offshore through Liechtenstein-based shell companies."

● *AS A MATTER of public interest, I feel it right to disclose that for a fleeting moment last week, the SUNDAY TIMES was abuzz with rumours ABOUT rather than created by the paper's editor, Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill.*

There was intense excitement on 9 June when a telephone call was received in the newsroom from GOLD, a New York society gossip magazine. "Could you please confirm," asked a GOLD reporter, "that Pamela Bordes is HIV positive?"

I am happy to confirm that there was not a scintilla of truth in the scurrilous allegation. Pamela is in excellent health, and the disgusting rumour-mongers at GOLD will have to concentrate on more worthy targets. Er... like the Royal family.

Pip Pip!

MUSIC & MUSICIANS

INTRIGUE is now mounting at the strife-torn Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra (see last *Eye*).

Since we announced that the RLPO was spending £1,500 a day plus VAT of public money to investigate complaints about artistic standards, the orchestra committee has now hired its own solicitors, Percy, Hughes & Roberts.

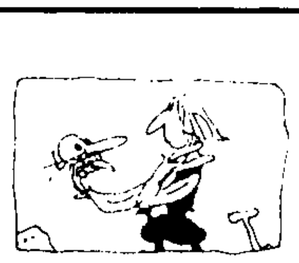
Strangely, the same firm acts for the Phil's chief executive, Bob "Creakey" Creech, late of Canada; but the law firm said it was able to represent both parties "because there was no conflict of interest". How could there be?

Hard up for cash because of a £9 million refurbishment, the RLPO can't afford big name players. It has stuffed next season's programme with lacklustre Canadians. Simon "The Great Unknown" Streetfield, an obscure ex-viola player, will be conducting the difficult Alpine Symphony by Strauss. Years ago he gave Creech's daughter Andria music lessons, and is currently looking for a permanent position as head of an orchestra somewhere. Joining him for the gig will be French Canadian pianist Andre Laplante.

Prestigious international engagements in Streetfield's career have included stints with the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, the Belgian and Danish Radio Symphony Orchestras, and the Bergen, Ponzan and Seoul Philharmonic Orchestras. Musical buffs the world over fondly recall his outstanding performance at the Guelph Spring Garden Festival, Ontario.

Creech's efforts to increase awareness of famous Canadians has not endeared him to the Phil's own musical director of five years' standing, Libor Pesek. Although chief executive is a non-musical appointment, the impending Rocky Mountain roadshow is a fresh example of Creech overstepping the mark to assume some of the director's function.

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'



LUVVIES

I'm enormously grateful that I feel a kind of shorthand with John, which is a real luxury. If he says, 'Go stand on your head somewhere', I'll say, 'Right, okay, I'll do it', and he'll say, 'What did you learn from that?'

STOCKARD CHANNING
on playwright John Guare
The Times

Submitted by by A.P.R.

NOOKS and CORNERS

I SUPPOSE we must be grateful for small mercies. In *Eye* 741 I discussed the threat to one of the last complete blocks of Georgian terraced houses in central London. Now, all of the terrace in Baker Street is to go — bar one, No 34, which was originally threatened and now will stay.

But why should any Georgian house be swept away in favour of a piece of meretricious post-modernism designed by those distinguished masons, the Fitzroy Robinson Partnership? It is a long story.

Back in 1980 a public inquiry was fought and won over these houses. But then, as I have already explained, a gamekeeper turned poacher when conservation's Marshal Ney, Brian Ashley Barker, OBE, FSA, FRIBA, AADipl. (Hons), etc, privatised himself and argued that the buildings he once defended on behalf of the Greater London Council were now of little value.

And then, for some reason, Westminster city council decided that Flairline Properties Ltd could do no wrong and so did not oppose their plans for this large site in Marylebone. The result is that although listed buildings in Blandford Street have been retained, those in George Street have been rebuilt behind their facades while the courtyard has been filled in by an office block by Fitzroy Robinson.

In 1990 English Heritage noted that "until 1989, this larger block of terraces had survived with little alteration for two hundred years and was the most complete of the original Portman Estate blocks fronting Baker Street." No longer: listed buildings have been partly gutted and some facades have been rebuilt after collapsing.

But why does one of the last pieces of Georgian Baker Street have to go? The trouble is that the buildings are unlisted, and when English Heritage asked for more of the Georgian houses

to be listed, not only did the Department of the Environment decline but it obliged the developer with one of those increasingly popular "certificates of immunity from listing". So, farewell then, Nos 20a-32 Baker Street — but at least No 34 is now staying — which required Fitzroy Robinson to redesign and marginally improve its wretched new building.

BRIAN Ashley Barker, OBE, FSA, FRIBA, AADipl.(Hons), etc, is now girding his loins for another profitable public inquiry. But at least this time he is being opposed by Westminster council as well as by English Heritage.

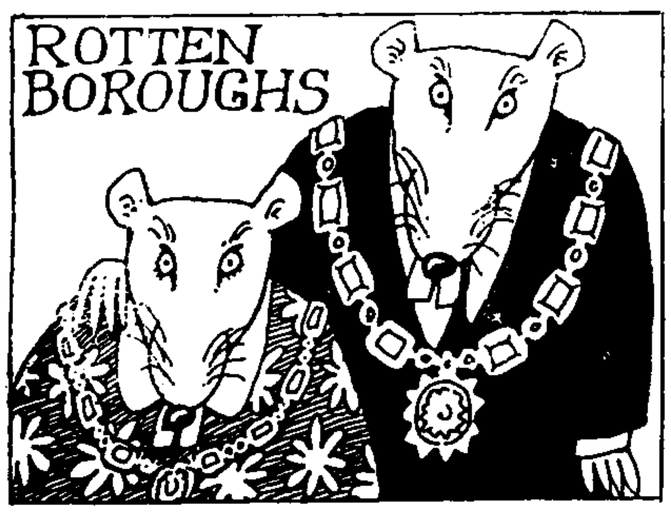
The case is that of the Time & Life building in New Bond Street, designed by the Viennese architect Michael Rosenauer and built in 1952-53. Its greedy owners, the Pearl Assurance Co (against whom the Soane Museum recently had to fight to stop being overshadowed by a grotesque over-enlargement of the company's headquarters in High Holborn) have hired Barker to argue in favour of gutting the interior and adding an extension to the terrace at one side.

The Time & Life building, although listed, may not be everyone's cup of tea. And its importance is not so much the well-mannered stone exterior by Rosenauer but the sculptural and interior work by a remarkable team of artists and architects. The terrace is protected by a stone screen formed of abstract sculptures by Henry Moore — one of only two architectural commissions by Moore and of the few recent examples of true integration of architecture and sculpture (as opposed to screwing a Hepworth onto the blank end wall of some terrible slab block). There was also a Henry Moore reclining bronze figure on the terrace itself — but that has somehow disappeared.

The interior of the building was fitted out with a series of carefully designed interiors under the supervision of Micha Black and Hugh Casson. There is sculpture by Geoffrey Clark and F.E. Macwilliam, furniture by Dick Russell, murals by Oliver Cox, and other work by F.H.K. Henrion, Neville Conder, Leonard Manasseh, etc. The result is a charming Festival of Britain stye period-piece, which is also rather good of its sort.

Now it is strange for this column to be defending a building with which Casson was involved, for Sir Hugh was, of course, the predecessor of Brian Ashley Barker, OBE, FSA, FRIBA, AADipl. (Hons), etc., as the leading hired demolition advocate ("expert witness") at public inquiries and, in consequence, a public figure on whom we have waged implacable war. But before he sold his soul, Casson did some useful work and had a conspicuous talent for commissioning and working with good architects and designers. So what if Pearl Assurance had tried this on a few years back and so went to Casson rather than Barker: would Sir Hugh have recommended the destruction of his own and his partner's work? We shall never know.

'Piloti'



LAMBETH

DOWN AT Spart-riddled Lambeth council in south-east London, who is the looniest of them all? Amazingly, the Tory group's deputy leader Peter Evans is giving Labour a run for its money.

The egregious Evans has proved his credentials as a budding Hezza clone by denouncing members of the town hall Nalgo union as "parasites" during a particularly exhausting Lambeth budget meeting and grabbing the council mace. Evans was only prevented from leaving the chamber with the ceremonial trophy by an hysterical chief executive Herman Ouseley.

At the next meeting Evans was only slightly better behaved, having an impromptu contretemps with tired-and-emotional mayor Joe Singh and transsexual ex-lorry driver Rachael Webb.

Evans claims he was kicked on the ground and bravely announced that in future he would be employing the services of a burly £140-a-night minder to protect him during council meetings, although, as many members pointed out, the protection would be more apt in reverse.

Though safe in the urban jungle that is Lambeth town hall, Evans made the mistake of leaving his minder at home for what should have been a harmless night at the outgoing mayor's leaving bash. Evans and his "partner" left at 10.30pm "for a breath of fresh air" and were promptly attacked by 10 bicycle chain-wielding kids who fractured his skull, took his credit cards and £100 in cash. Evans is now being nursed back to health and we wish him a speedy return to guerilla warfare in the snake pit that is Lambeth council.

MURKEYSIDE

THE conflict between political principle and the need to empty tourist's pockets of large sums of money (*Eye* 776) daily grows more evident as the "Grand Regatta Columbus" week approaches.

The Murkeyside Development Corporation originally made a bid for the return of the Tall Ships Race in the late 1980s, on the grounds of Liverpool's "historic" connections with Columbus. What members of the MDC hadn't bargained for was the substantial number of people worldwide who felt that 1492 was an occasion for mourning rather than celebration.

In Liverpool, as usual, the worthies are all over the place. They met the party poopers, who go under the name of the "500 Years of Resistance Campaign", and promised to rename the "celebration" a "commemoration" and drop all reference to the "Columbus Regatta" from MDC publicity in favour of the neutral title, "Return of the Tall Ships".

Another interesting development was the MDC's offer of £44,000 to fund *anti*-Columbus events. The MDC priority is to attract business people and tourists to Murkeyside and keep 'em happy. They don't want lefties, blacks and latinos upsetting it all with demonstrations that raise the issue of Liverpool's role in the slave trade.

Many cynics thus see the MDC's offer to fund "alternative events" as hush money. Their suspicions have been heightened by the behaviour of self-appointed spokesperson for the world's oppressed, Steve Mumby, whose comrades' coffers have been depleted of late owing to the collapse of the Moscow gold market.

Secretary of the Murkeyside Communist Party, which now trades under the name "Democratic Left" (plc), Mumby's "alternative" event is a "preaching to the converted" rally at Liverpool university starring Sandanista leader Daniel Ortega. The chaps at MDC will be only too happy to fund that! At £75 a ticket for a Ferry 'Cross the Mersey and a million and a half tourists expected, bankrolling some loony-left rally high up on Brownlow Hill, far away from the Murkey riverbank, is a small price to pay.

TV

Strathblair

(BBC 1)

MINORITY groups generally do rather well out of British television. There are special programmes for gays (*Out*), blacks (*The Black Bag*), Australians (*Neighbours, Home and Away*), oldies (*The Third Wave*) and even the mentally ill (*Noel's House Party*). Fans of jazz, gardening, sumo wrestling and Loyd Grossman are all catered for. Even John Birt has his own programme, *Panorama*, which is now so boring no one else watches it at all.

No minority group, though, has ever been quite so well served by British television as sheep fanciers. Masquerading as "family" programmes, a startling number of sheep-related drama series have run successfully over the years, most set in beautiful and outlying regions of the British isles, and all featuring an awful lot of sheep. *Strathblair*, from BBC Scotland, is but the latest. It pretends to be a lush and romantic evocation of 1950s rural life, but in reality it's barely disguised sheep porn.

As in all such productions, the plot is thin to the point of transparency. The year is 1950, and Jenny, a nice young thing from Somewhere South, has married Alec, a strong-and-silent Scottish farmer who spends a lot of his time banging in fence poles. She loves him, but all those rough and badly made costumes left over from *Dr Finlay's Casebook* are beginning to get her down. Fortunately, there's a suitably bizarre collection of local eccentrics to keep her (and us) amused.

There's an Italian named Umberto who never quite got round to going back to Italy after the war. There's Ian Carmichael, notional star of the series, but doomed, like David McCallum in *Trainer*, to making only the occasional cameo appearance when the budget allows. And there's Andrew Keir, looking as gaunt and cross as ever, as an unusually gaunt and cross local farmer called Macrae of Balbuie. In this sort of series, someone always has to be called Macrae of Balbuie.

Needless to say, nothing actually happens. Last week, everyone ate some porridge, and then some posh friends of Jenny's came to stay for the weekend, saying "I say" a lot. Up the road, Pheemie's great aunt Ishbel also turned up, and, in a gripping sequence, won

first prize in the cake-baking competition at the local agricultural show. Bagpipes were played, men in outrageously long shorts ran a cross-country race, and lots of other people wore kilts. Later, Jenny had trouble with a ghost in her barn, but happily this was finally exorcised by great aunt Ishbel, who turned out not to be a silly bag after all, but a sage, seer and visionary, saying things like "The house is only trying to tell you its secrets". Afterwards they both went off for a cup of tea.

All of which is thoroughly entertaining, of course, and full of the usual touches — good props, fruity accents and turgid orchestral music — that characterise this sort of nostalgic BBC drama. Tiny topical details are regularly dropped into the dialogue, just to remind us where and when we all are. But the real stars of the show are unquestionably the sheep. Eating grass, gambolling around fields, bleating a lot, being chased by sheepdogs, bleating a bit more, sheep are never far from the action. The camera clearly loves them. Each ovine cast member is photographed with a care and an attention to detail that border on the lascivious. And Macrae of Balbuie, gaunt and cross though he may normally be, positively lights up when given the opportunity to converse with his prize ram. He grasps it fondly by the horns, chivvying it along gently.

Even when sheep are not specifically involved in the plot, you can hear them bleating in the background, sometimes in a state of high old excitement. All this is of course meat and drink (with mint sauce) to the massed armies of sheep fanciers, who must have feared after the end of *All Creatures Great and Small* that their interests would henceforth be ignored. Fortunately, public service broadcasting understands its responsibilities. What is strange is that no one else seems to have noticed the programme's true intent. But as a notable aficionado of Falklands sheep once observed, it's a funny old world.

'Old Couch Potato'

JENNI MURRAY SPEAKS OUT

MEDIA NEWS

ON BBC1's *Question Time* recently, Ian Hay Davison told the audience that it had been as plain as a pikestaff that Robert Maxwell had been a crook ever since he had been condemned by Department of Trade and Industry inspectors in 1970.

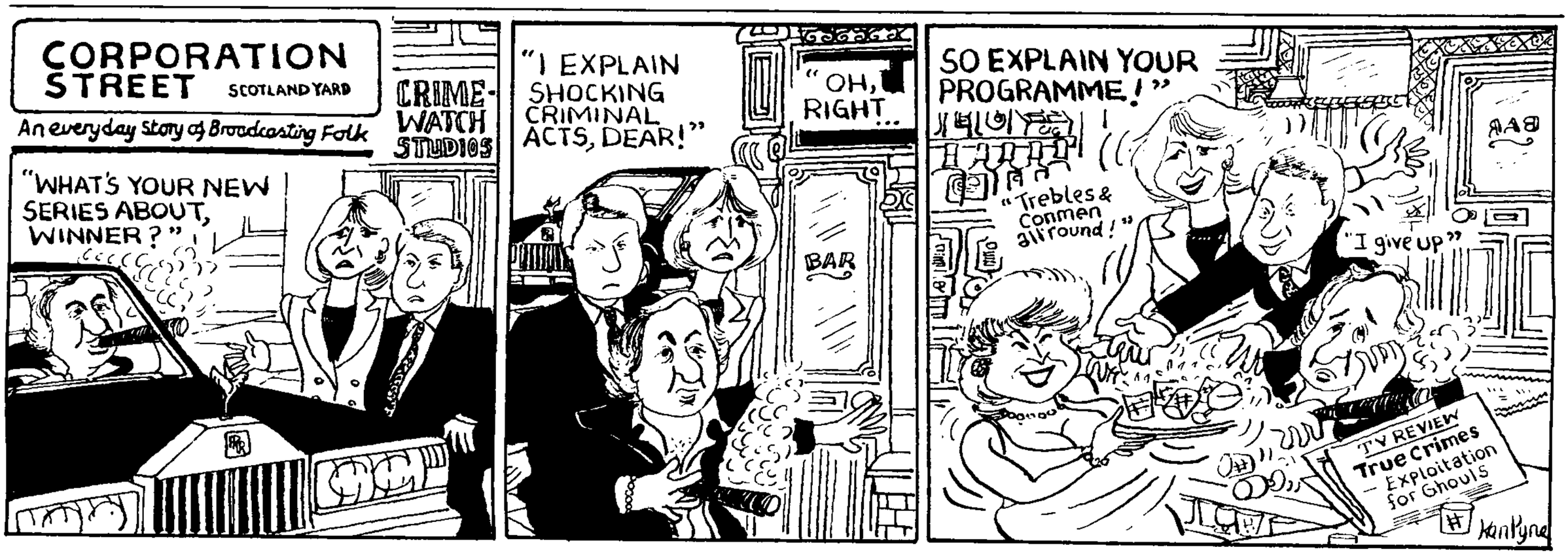
Hay Davison: *Mr Maxwell did not change his spots and what he ended up doing was in my view entirely predictable...*

Peter Sissons: *Then why did the banks lend him money?*

Hay Davison: *I... Absolutely... Why, indeed, did the banks lend him money and more important why did the authorities permit him to continue despite that clear judgement? Certain of us, and I was one, did not agree with lending him money, did not work for him, certainly knew him for what he was.*

With self-righteous pride, Hay Davison gave the somewhat misleading impression that he had had no truck whatsoever with Cap'n Bob. Yet in 1988 he became chairman of Laing & Cruickshank, Maxwell's stockbroker. At around this time the firm's analyst, Henry Poole, who had previously been a leading fan of Maxwell Communications Corporation stock, suddenly changed his mind and began to advise clients to sell rather than buy.

Since Maxwell was Laing's biggest client and Laing's was now a subsidiary of Maxwell's bankers, Credit Lyonnais, he brought pressure to bear and Hay Davison was called to Cap'n Bob's HQ at Holborn Circus. Hay Davison told Maxwell that Poole had given MCC a poor rating because of its accounts, but he did not publicly speak out against Maxwell. Instead, Laing & Cruickshank continued to act as Maxwell's broker. Henry Poole was moved to another department and replaced by Johnny Bevan — who took a different view of MCC.



MEANWHILE the Beeb's news and current affairs (NCA) management finds itself in a position not unlike that of John Major when he inherited Number 10 and the poll tax. The problem is how to jettison policies for which one is responsible while avoiding the resulting egg on face.

Just five years ago NCA expanded journalist and production numbers by some 200 percent to meet the Birtist dream of a mission to (mis)inform, via news teams dedicated to each news bulletin. Now the directorate must return to the situation pertaining before Birt's brave new world — a common team without dedication (no pun intended). This retreat from Birt's grandiose schemes is being trumpeted absurdly as a "bold new step forward" and given the ludicrous title of "Concept News".

EFFORTS by the ever-increasing ranks of "management" at the BBC's news and current affairs directorate have reached new heights of absurdity.

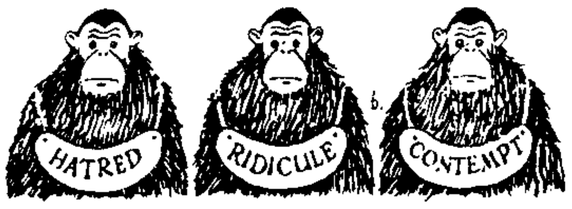
TV newsreaders are to be equipped with a foot pedal to control their autocues, thus doing away with autocue operators and saving their (minimal) salaries. Needless to say, any obvious difficulties — such as what happens when stories are dropped or reshuffled during a bulletin and autocues need amending accordingly, as is virtually always the case — have been brushed aside. Could this be something to do with the widely rumoured (and even more widely believed) bonuses being paid to senior management for achieving a target level of redundancies each month?

THE FINAL curtain has fallen for Christopher Edwards, who for five and a half years has been toiling away in Doughty Street as a theatre critic at the *Spectator*.

He has sat in the dark of a night with the likes of Milton Shulman and Jack Tinker, not that anyone ever knew who he was. And perhaps this is why Dominic Lawson has asked him to go by the end of the month to make way for the most brilliant theatre critic the world will ever know: one Sheridan Morley.

Could this be the same Sheridan Morley who has just been signed up by Popeye to write a biography of Dear Dad and who has been looking for a weekly critical berth since being dismissed from *Punch* by Alan Coren's successor to make way for that giddy New Yorker, Rhoda Koenig?

LIBEL NEWS



THE lachrymose and litigious Duncan "Dunky" Campbell, a *New Statesman* hack of the homosexual persuasion, has emerged from his lair with an extraordinary new threat.

Last month, it will be recalled, Dunky finally concluded his infamous libel suit against the *Pink Paper*, a gay weekly, over an article on Aids treatment published in October 1989. He won damages of £20,000.

Now he has written to the *Pink Paper* complaining about the coverage of the trial, not least in this magazine (*Eyes passim*). If anything rude about him is published anywhere, he warns, he may be forced to sue the *Pink Paper* all over again, claiming damages for its original 1989 article. But, er, hasn't he done that already? Dunky explains that the new writ will be issued in Scotland — which, he says, is a separate jurisdiction and is therefore unaffected by the outcome of his suit over the same article in England.

This novel version of double-jeopardy — which even the late Robert Maxwell never thought of — opens up all sorts of thrilling libel possibilities. Once the Scottish case is over, he can sue in Northern Ireland. And then there is the Isle of Man...

On the other hand, bearing in mind the Isle of Man's antipathy to same-sexers, perhaps not.

HACKWATCH No 24: Royal Humbug Special

"Senior royal advisers... say the book is almost certain to damage the couple's marriage beyond repair, when there had been a last chance to save it."
Front page story, the SUN, *5 June.*

"It's the book the whole world is talking about... It's gripping, it's sad, it's history in the making. And it's all true. You can start reading it, chapter by chapter, only in the *Sun* next week. Order your copy today."
SUN, *10 June.*

"Last night Britain sighed with sadness for Di — and sent her a massive wave of sympathy as she faced incredible strain. Friends and MPs lashed the 'shabby and intrusive' treatment she was receiving."
DAILY STAR, *6 June.*

"Royal Marriage in Torment — Special Report: Pages 2, 3, 4 & 5."
DAILY STAR, *6 June.*

"Even the most ardent royalist will be shocked at the wall of uncaring indifference which met this lonely, bewildered young woman in her hours of crisis... The Queen MUST now pay serious heed to the message coming from her restive subjects. WE are not amused."
DAILY STAR, *8 June.*

"Never, in 25 years at the journalistic cutting edge of this world, have I ever encountered such vitriolic indiscretion... It is exactly what the Royal Family doesn't need at this time... Let the light in on the Royal Family, it has been observed, and it loses its mystery. I will therefore draw a veil over breakfast at Highgrove on Sunday morning and leave it to your imagination."
Ross Benson, DAILY EXPRESS, *5 June.*

"Marriage in Crisis"
Title of series by Ross Benson in DAILY EXPRESS *on 8, 9, 10 June.*

"The Royals: A Family at War"
Headline on page one of EVENING STANDARD, *5 June.*

"Suicidal Despair, Loveless Marriage"
Headline on pp.2 and 3 of EVENING STANDARD, *5 June.*

"Is It Time to Leave the Royals Alone?"
Headline on leader-page of EVENING STANDARD, *5 June.*

"The point about Andrew Morton's book is that it seems to have the implicit approval of the Princess herself... For whatever strange reasons, Lady Diana has chosen to remind us that the present generation of royals behaves almost as badly as did Queen Victoria's horrible old uncles. I think we should be grateful to her."
A.N. Wilson, full-page article in EVENING STANDARD, *8 June.*

"The Crown must bear some of the responsibility for what has happened and so must the press, which has been prurient and intrusive... I think that everyone now needs a break from this agonizing story..." (And so on, for another whole page.)
A.N. Wilson, EVENING STANDARD, *10 June.*

"The *Sunday Times* and the *Sun* which together have invested more than £500,000 in Andrew Morton's book suggest the Princess has somehow cooperated in its compilation. Well, they would, wouldn't they? The *Mirror* today publishes the Princess's complete rebuttal of that claim in the most clear and precise terms."
DAILY MIRROR, *8 June.*

"Diana last night warmly embraced the former flatmate who contributed to the controversial book about her marriage... Diana clearly told the world: 'I approve of everything she has done.' "
DAILY MIRROR, *11 June.*

"It is painful to dwell on the melancholy state of the marriage of the heir to the throne."
DAILY MAIL *editorial, 6 June.*

"Diana: The Unhappiness Behind the Smile. Turn to Page 17, 18 and 19."
DAILY MAIL, *6 June.*

"The best thing for Prince Charles and Diana now will be to spend time together, quietly and away from the public gaze."
SUN *editorial, 12 June.*

"The love that moved Diana to tears."
Page one, same day.

"You give pride and joy to us all, may you always remain just you."
Pages 2-3.

"Di's not like the royals. She was never trained to hide her tears..."
Page nine.

"10 tell-tale signs of a woman about to crack..."
Page nine.

"Cry Di, it's good for you..."
Page nine.

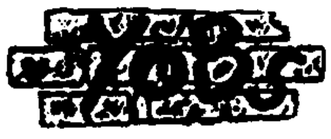
"At the end of the day a smile..."
Pages 22-23.

"I spoke only about her illness. It was levelled at me that I was the one who had sorted her out. I agreed to talk because I think it is very important that anyone with bulimia should seek professional advice... I spoke about the issue because I assumed — and still do — that this is a book with integrity, a book that shows what she has come through and that all is well. I was also persuaded that as a result it would show that two stronger, better persons had been produced. I have no reason to mistrust the author... I believe that the intention was good and honourable."
Statement by Carolyn Bartholomew, former flatmate of Princess of Wales, 9 June.

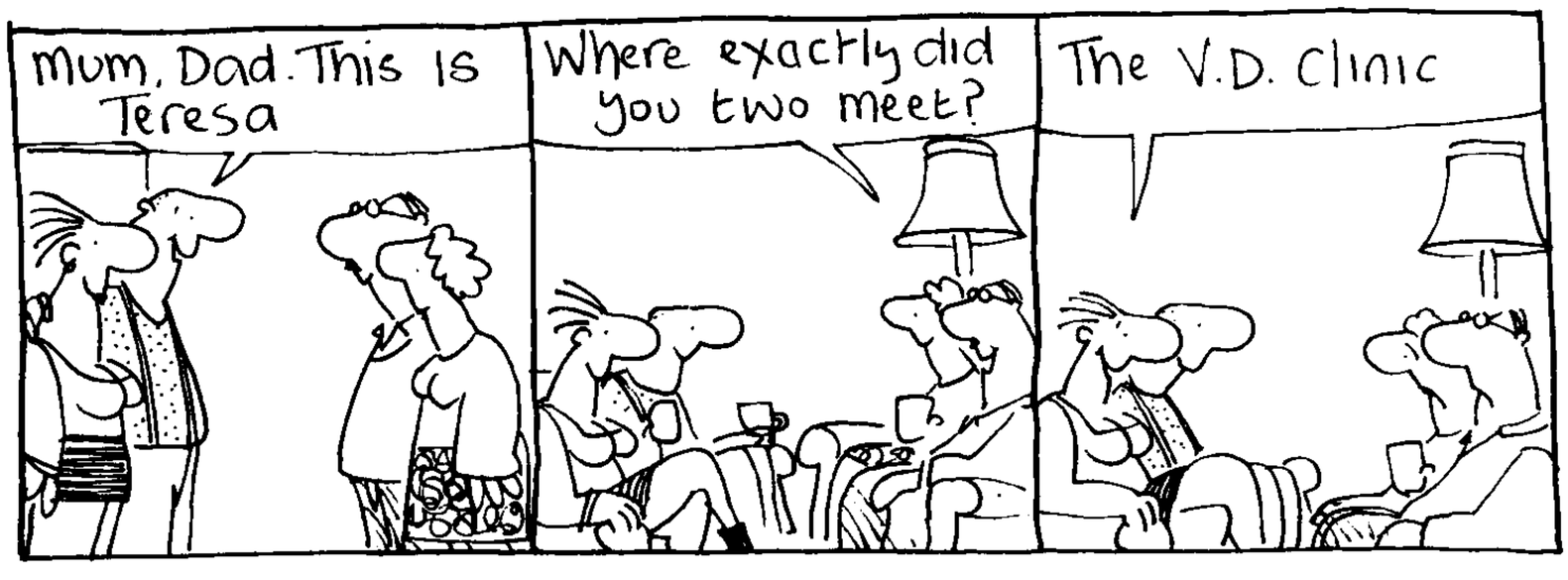
JUST FANCY THAT

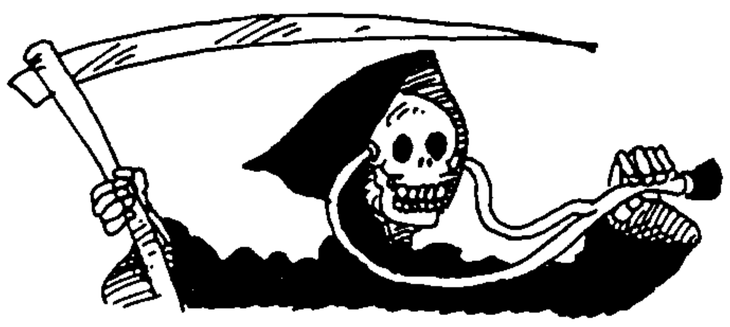
FROM Ivan Fallon's "View Point" column, *Sunday Times*, 16 December 1990: "Canary Wharf is unfinished but as I drive past it each day I find it a truly impressive site... One day it will be London's third city centre, providing beautiful offices and shopping facilities to the businesses of the future."

From Ivan Fallon's "View Point" column, *Sunday Times*, 31 May 1992: "What will come out of the wreckage of the Canary Wharf crash?... The so-called 'Club of Eleven', which includes Hongkong & Shanghai and some of the Canadian banks, has lent approximately £570m for a project which has cost nearly £1.9 billion (there is, of course, a huge raft of unsecured debt, but we can ignore that for the moment). The Reichmanns could never make a return on that investment... If Canary Wharf now becomes an uninhabited ghost-town, all the grand plans for Docklands and east London will die with it."



HUSBAND





DOING THE ROUNDS

● DOCTORS supporting suspended surgeon Mr Philip Lyndon are appealing to health secretary Virginia Bottomley to intervene. Last year, surgeons at **Dewsbury Hospital** made the huge gaffe of asking for an extra pair of hands. Before consenting, **Yorkshire Regional Health Authority** decided to audit the work of the three existing artisans. One passed with flying colours, another was rusty but not beyond salvage and Mr Lyndon was advised to go on a "training sabbatical". He refused and was duly suspended on a charge of incompetence. The case has divided the profession although most agree that if medical training is widely audited, a lot will be "going on sab".

● TRUST hospitals do at least agree with the **Royal College of Surgeons** on the promotion of women. Although the NHS is Europe's biggest female employer, only 0.9 percent of consultant surgeons, 9 percent of trust chief executives and 6 percent of trust chair-people could share a powder room with the gorgeous, pouting Mrs Bottomley.

● AT **Guildford's Royal Surrey County Hospital**, a casualty patient was surprised to be asked about health insurance status, while at nearby **Epsom General** a woman was told she could have her test tomorrow, if she paid for it, otherwise in July (year unspecified). Both hospitals are new-wave trusts.

● MORE evidence of the NHS's reliance on charity: at the **Royal Gwent Hospital**, the £1,100 profit from the Red Cross trolley has allowed manager Celia Satherney to indulge her site in luxuries few hospitals can afford: mattresses, foot stools, commodes and bedpans.

● THE **Royal Oldham NHS Trust** is budgeting wisely for the future: £30,000 was spent on a new information bureau whose three uniformed staff invariably outnumber the customers. In nearby casualty, meanwhile, a 17-year-old crash victim was rushed in by ambulance only to wait *five hours* for assessment (that's just 285 minutes longer than John Major's charter pledge).

Chief executive Peter Shrigley has promised to employ extra nurses to provide such immediate assessment, which may come as a surprise to the Royal's 17 newly-qualified nurses who have been offered seven part-time jobs between them. The nurses, who have been raking in £7,900 a year for a 37½ hour week, were told of their prospects with a week of their training to go. Mr Shrigley blamed the recession.

● NURSES don't always come cheap. The **Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust** has advertised for nurse practitioners (NPs) to work in its departments of surgery and orthopaedics. Such super nurses are deemed to have extended roles (such as putting up drips, taking blood, recording ECGs and prescribing over-the-counter medications) to relive the strain on junior doctors.

At **Cheltenham Trust**, one such rejuvenated sister has taken to clerking and examining patients prior to theatre, which has upset the anaesthetists and negated the point of medical training. Taunton's advertisements rank the NP alongside the houseman in the illustrated hierarchy, presumably allowing progression to consultanthood.

Aspiring NPs have at least to be on a G-grade salary. Since nursing overtime starts in excess off 37½ hours (40 for doctors) and earns up to time and two-thirds (half time for doctors), an NP working the hours of a houseman would earn more than a consultant.

● THATCHERITE Tony Clegg, chairman of the huge **Leeds General Infirmary trust**, is doing everything in his power to bring to hospital management the values which shot him to success as a property developer in the 1980s.

He converted a small northern property company into Mountleigh, one of the success stories of the decade, and got out of Mountleigh by selling his shares for the usual £50 million or so. He was promptly appointed by the Government he so strongly (and expensively) supported to his new post at the Leeds General. Mountleigh has now gone bust, of course, but that will not affect the confidence or the continuing rise to glory of Mr Clegg.

LGI has announced one redundancy in the pathology department. He is Dr Chris Chapman. Dr Chapman has saved the NHS millions of pounds by his criticisms of waste, and by his own inventions. He is a strong supporter of the NHS and a stern critic of the new trust. He is the sort of person who might criticise profligate, bureaucratic or nepotistic behaviour in the management. Health unions, outraged, have threatened strike action.

Meanwhile, Tony Clegg and his property-conscious management team are eyeing up the valuable land irritatingly occupied by **Killingbeck Hospital**. If Killingbeck services could be moved into Leeds and merged with the LGI, a great deal of money could be made. The problem is that not everyone at Killingbeck is keen on the idea. Duncan Walker, the children's heart surgeon consultant, for instance, has been an outspoken critic of privatising the health service. Mr Walker might prove as difficult to remove as has Dr Chapman.

● AT **Weston General Trust Hospital**, a sponsored trial to administer free thrombolytic (clot-dissolving) injections to all heart attack patients within 24 hours of the onset of symptoms has finished.

Now forced to pay (£70 a shot), Dr E John Wakely (consultant cardiologist and clinical director for medical services) has decided to prohibit the use of such therapy in any patient presented more than six hours after the onset of chest pain. Such patients could thus be denied potentially life saving treatment were it not for doctors "miscalculating" the time elapsed. In nearby **Taunton**, therapy is given up to 12 hours after onset.

Last month, however, a senior member of the medical staff was admitted to Weston's casualty with a suspected heart attack. Despite having had symptoms for more than 24 hours, thrombolysin was administered. The decision was taken by a certain Dr E John Wakely.

● KEY-HOLE surgery is oft quoted as a major advance, even though it has never been subjected to controlled trials. At the **Bristol Royal Infirmary**, three surgeons took a mere 12 hours to perform a laporascopic hemicolectomy (trying to get half the bowel out through the key-hole) while the houseman was left in sole charge of the rest of the patients. Advance indeed...

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'

THE Horticultural Development Council (HDC), a government quango set up to look after research into space age tomatoes and bionic lettuces, has an odd view of democracy.

The HDC and its tax-raising powers on growers were originally confirmed in a non-secret ballot of registered growers three years ago. With a hair's breadth majority, a small clique of them voted that *all* growers should pay a research tax, even though 85 per cent of them had been denied a vote.

Old Muck has learned that the number of ballot papers sent out exceeded the official number of registered growers as stated in the council's own annual report at the time. Could this be why the quango was so unwilling to allow the Electoral Reform Society to administer the ballot?

In a leaflet sent out with the ballot papers, the HDC pledged that in the event of government funds to horticultural research falling below £11 million there would be a further ballot on whether the HDC should continue its compulsory tax.

This year the subsidy ministry has earmarked just £7.7 million for such research. So why hasn't the council announced another ballot? And why the deafening silence from the NFU, which is supposed to represent growers' interests and see fair play?

Could it be the big growers at Agriculture House, who dominate the HDC's specialist committees, find this a cheap way to get others to pay for their R&D and don't want to give up a nice little earner? Surely not.

THE Nature Conservancy Council (NCC), the former environmental watchdog, was put down by the Thatcher government for daring to speak up in favour of the countryside in the face of entrenched political interests.

English Nature, the NCC's successor, intends to make no such mistake. Having carried out — at public expense — a painstaking study of pollution caused by drifting pesticide spray, the so-called guardians of the environment are now determined that not a word of it should reach the public.

The feeble conservationists claim to have "a unique understanding of pesticide drift", and they got it by studying the impact of drift on "thousands of specially bred plants and insects under different weather conditions". EN's head of pollution, Dr Arnie Cooke, blathers: "We are taking action to make certain information from the research work is given as wide and airing as possible".

That means that the results go to a cosy group representing the pesticide establishment, including the chemical manufacturers, spray contractors, NFU and MAFF. The paranoid conservationists even kept details of the findings off the pages of their own magazine.

Taxpayers may well wonder why they are obliged to stump up for this subsidised research on behalf of the pesticide industry.

WITH HIS mouth full of stilton, food minister David Maclean last year gave encouragement to Britain's small, specialist cheesemakers. Today, however, the Government is doing nothing as the European Community destroys their little industry.

Brussels doesn't like the small cheesemakers because they produce cheese for real markets instead of EC coldstores and there are thus no subsidies for the well-paid bureaucrats to administer. The makers have now been ordered to *cut* their production so consumers have to eat more factory cheddar turned out by the ton at vast cost to the taxpayer.

Meanwhile overproduction minister Gummer is busy crowing that reform of the common agricultural policy is a major step forward for British consumers and taxpayers...

Old Macdonald

ALBERT

WHAT ARE YOU SHOOTING JAYS?
NO, RAMBLERS! THERE'S A RIGHT OF WAY OVER MY TOP FIELD..
MISERABLE BUGGER! THERE'S NOTHING UP THERE BUT NETTLES
THEN IT CROSSES MY POND
THEY'RE ONLY WALKING
..THEN IT GOES THROUGH YOUR PIGSTY
SOO OFF!! YOU TOWNIE BASTARDS!
albert

Letters

Privy seal

Sir,

Is the latest descent of the Murdoch machine into the sewers intended to promote the downfall of the monarchy, or to provoke a "privacy" law of such ferocity that the manoeuvres of Very Large Businessmen will hereafter be immune from the attention of those parts of the media which they do not already control?

Yours faithfully,
P.T.H. GARDER,

Morecambe, Lancs.

Hans me downs

Sir,

Can any EYE *readers or collectors help me in my research by telling me in which back issues I can find the famous "Hans Killer" parodies? Oh — and if anyone has any letters or tape-recordings of Mr Keller, could they please let me know also?*

Yours sincerely,
MARK DORAN,

Hans Keller Archive,
Dept. of Music,

O·B·N

Note worthy

Sir,

My father, Mr James Brown, was the French horn professor at the Royal Academy of Music in London for 25 years. Dad died on 11 May 1992. On that same day I reported the news of his death, in person, to the secretary at the academy. After I told the secretary the sad news of Dad's death, the only words the secretary spoke in reply were, and I quote word perfect: "We did not know about that, nobody told us." And that is all.

To date (4 June) my mother has received no letter of condolence or communication in any form from the management of the Royal Academy of Music. It was with some dismay that I read the following letter in the INDEPENDENT *of 30 May, the same paper that had published Dad's obituary:*

Sir:

Alas, I never met Peter Jenkins, but I feel I have lost a friend and an ally, the more so since learning more about him in today's INDEPENDENT.

Time and again his perceptive and stimulating insights into situations and into personalities have guided me into an understanding of my own problems, often indicating a way forward. It is now too late to thank him. I am deeply grateful, and I should like his family and his friends to know that, in the certain knowledge that there must be thousands like me.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID LUMSDEN
Principal, Royal Academy.

I agree with the contents of Sir David's letter but believe his motive for writing it to be that of self-aggrandizement, to have the pleasure of seeing his own name in the press. Perhaps he will enjoy reading his name in PRIVATE EYE.

For writing such an eloquent appreciation of a man he never met, while showing such disregard for his employees and subordinates, I wish to recommend Sir David Lumsden for a very well-deserved OBN.

Yours sincerely,
R.J. BROWN

London SW16.

"Cap'n, it's the men. They say you're going soft."

G. stop

Sir,

Although much has been said about trams, particularly the Manchester ones, there have been few letters from readers in Manchester. So here's one.

As the link from Victoria Station to Bury already existed, I'll confine my comments to the new extension from Victoria Station to the G-Mex (Exhibition Centre). (Those who are not familiar with Manchester should know that Victoria Station has recently been downgraded, with most of the services transferred to Piccadilly; G-Mex, like Olympia, is only operational sporadically, while the so-called "G-Mex" station is actually so far from the Exhibition Centre entrance that it is easier to walk from the stop before it. Fat lot of good that is.)

The months of frustrating disruption to traffic, the massive expenditure from the public purse, the fact that buses, lorries, cars and pedestrians now have to squeeze their way through thoroughfares reduced by two or even three lanes to accommodate the tram tracks — all these could have been tolerated if the trams served any useful purpose. But like the part-time G-Mex and the moribund Victoria Station halts, the tram stops seem to be located as far as possible from any centre of human activity, apart, possibly, from a stop outside Debenham's in one direction, and Piccadilly Bus Station in the other — although not, alas, in both directions.

Consequently, this vastly expensive technological folly, which stops more often at traffic lights than it does for passengers, runs virtually empty. In the two-carriage articulated trams, half-a-dozen passengers make a crowd. To give just one example: on the Friday before the bank holiday weekend, at 5 o'clock, and at the height of the rush hour, a tram passing the art gallery in Mosley Street carried one solitary passenger. It wasn't me.

Yours,
DEREK WALTERS,

Manchester.

Lookalike

David Mellor

Ken Wee

Sir,

Have you noticed the extraordinary resemblance between Mr David Mellor, the Minister for Fun, and Mr Tony Wee, the Korean Restaurateur? Are they by any chance related?

Yours sincerely
G.G. SHERRIN,

World's End, London SW10

Chamber pots

Sir,

Your snippet on the House of Lords is wrong (Grovel, 5 June). They get not £60 per day but:

Overnight allowance	*£60*
Subsistence	*£23*
Secretarial	*£23*

They also get:

Car allowance	*35.4p per mile*
Railway allowance	*20,000 miles per year*

Subsidised food and drink.

It adds up, PER DAY, *to three times the* WEEKLY *old age pension.*

Claims are never checked, but of course a lord would never claim overnight allowance, etc. illegally, would he? In all fairness, it takes at least 13 minutes to leave one's car, "book in" and return to the car again. Sometimes they even spend a few minutes in the chamber.

The argument that the poor in comparison are severely punished for claiming a few pounds over entitlement for unemployment, rent allowance, etc. is impertinent. Where would standards be set without a House of Lords?

A.R. WYTHE,

Walberswick, Suffolk.

Print doubt

Sir,

*There is absolutely no truth in Bookworm's scurrilous allegation (*EYE, *5 June) that publishers who do not subscribe to our weekly printouts do not find their books on the bestsellers lists. This week, for example,* MAXWELL'S FALL *by Roy Greenslade is at No 6 in the Paperback General List and is published by Simon & Schuster, who do not subscribe. There are others.*

It is true that most large publishers do subscribe to our printouts based on actual sales figures from about 75 shops a week. But it is also true that small publishers, and even authors, subscribe as well, even though their books never get within a signing session of the Top Ten. They presumably find it worthwhile to have us track the retail sales of their books in a trade which still indulges in an antiquated version of "sale or return", where unsolds and therefore net sales are not known for six months to a year.

Most of Bookworm's other facts are wrong but as I usually enjoy your fortnightly tilt at others I will not bore fellow readers with accurate details.

Yours faithfully,
PETER W. HARLAND,

Managing Director, Bookwatch,
Chesham, Bucks.

Slag off

Sir,

I'm glad to hear John Walsh has banned log-rolling and personal vendettas on the Sunday Times book pages (Hackwatch, EYE *795). But did he check with Julie Burchill before she reviewed my novel* THE MOTHER IN LAW JOKE *on Sunday 31 May where she wrote: "Unlike my own novel* AMBITION *(!) Martyn Harris' novel is not profound, funny or sexy." She went on, "I have a certain amount of admiration for Harris, but why he wastes his time writing this facile Carry On Up The Comedy Store stuff when he could be producing quality smut remains a mystery to me..."*

Is this the same Julie Burchill whose play PRINCE *I reviewed in the* SPECTATOR *last year, remarking "I am an admirer of Julie Burchill but I am also irritated by the way she squanders her talents on porn novels and Mailtrash attitudinising..."?*

I think we have been told.

Yours,
MARTYN HARRIS,

London N8.

Classless Society

ROYAL EQUERRY

The Duke of York has appointed Capt Rupert Seymour Aulin Leslie Maitland-Titterton, 9th/12th Royal Lancers (Prince of Wales's), to be his Equerry with effect from tomorrow. He succeeds Capt Alexander Buchanan-Baillie-Hamilton, who relinquishes his post on completion of his tour of duty.

Daily Telegraph

I-SPY *Scotland*

Submitted by John Harrison. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photgraphs. No transparencies.)*

The person from Porlock

Sir,

It was unfair of you to berate John Walsh of the Sunday Times for what appears in the Harvey Porlock column. As better informed organs like the Sunday Express and Punch pointed out some months ago, Walsh doesn't write Porlock; I do.

Incidentally, it was never said that Amanda Craig's reviews were full of critical clichés, gossip and blather — a reckless generalisation that would have been both unfair and inaccurate. The reference was to one particular item, an unhappy review of Gloria Steinem's book on self-esteem.

Yours faithfully,
TERENCE BLACKER,

London W12.

Pillar of the Society

Sir,

Re. Ernest Saunders

May I congratulate you on your articles in PRIVATE EYE *Nos. 791 and 794 in connection with the above named who was released early from Ford Open Prison because of his* IRREVERSIBLE SENILE DEMENTIA.

If he was really suffering from this dreadful disease, which is Alzheimer's Disease, he would not be capable of giving coherent talks about anything. As a carer of my wife, who suffers from this disease, I well know what it is like.

His actions make a mockery of all the society is doing, and brings it into disrepute.

As you are aware, there is no known cure for the disease and once you have it there is no light at the end of the tunnel and progress is only downhill.

I am enclosing newspaper cuttings and also a leaflet from our Society regarding the disease, which is self explanatory.

The public need education on this subject, and possibly you may see your way to publish an article. May I suggest that Saunders could donate the money he receives from his talks to the Alzheimer's Society.

Yours sincerely,
K.B. MAPPLEBECK, MBE,

King's Lynn, Norfolk.

Water hogs

Sir,

*Your article (*EYE *795) on Michael Howards' dynamic inactivity to lessen the water shortage contained one glaring inaccuracy. Dishwashers don't use 55 litres of water per cycle, more like 25-35 litres. That's about 2-2½ kitchen sinks' worth, ie a little less than you'd use to do the equivalent day's worth of washing up by hand.*

Anyone still in need of a good excuse to buy a dishwasher could try this: a reliable source informs me that the main ingredient in leading brands of washing up liquid is the urine from factory farmed pigs. It is, apparently, a good surface active chemical, and of course, very kind to hands.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD HODGSON,

West Didsbury, Manchester.

State meant

Sir,

Those old Yugoslavian state anagrams in full:
Rabies
Atrocia
A comedian
No, not merge
Behaving o so zanier
I've loans

Yours faithfully,
TREVOR CROWTHER,

Nr Ghouls, Berks.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

Caller: *"I'd like you to play this record for my fiancé Neale."*
'Doc' Fox: *"What's your fiancé called?"*
Caller: *"Neale..."*
CAPITAL FM
(Simon Hall)

"They (the BBC) must blow their own trumpet and have others blow their own trumpet for them."
PAUL BOATENG, BBC1
(Vincent Wildman)

"There's nothing like seeing two protagonists having a nose to nose tète a tète."
RICHARD SKINNER, GLR
(Tony Hargreaves)

"I've been bitten by the ferocious tongue of Frank Rich."
MICHAEL PRAED, BBC1
(Ian S. Fraser)

"And this is the real carrot at the end of the rainbow."
PAUL LYNEHAM, ABC TV, AUSTRALIA
(Christopher Price)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

Letter from **Israel**

from Our Own Correspondent

PREDICTIONS about the results of our parliamentary elections this month change by the hour. But there is already one clear winner — Israel's international standing.

With 25 parties freely wooing the voter, the election campaign has helped reestablish our democratic credentials. Our white-haired top contestants, prime minister Yitzhak Shamir and opposition leader Yitzhak Rabin, are at least behaving with the grace of real statesmen: Shamir has politely described his Likud party's West Bank settlements as a mere continuation of Labour's own; and Rabin has been at pains to explain that he, too, rejects a Palestinian state.

Housing minister Ariel Sharon, normally keen to ferment inter-party strife, is too busy to campaign. He is fielding the protests voiced against a huge settlement he is planning on a site called "David's City" — not just by Palestinians. "David's City" is the core of ancient Jerusalem, conquered by the Hebrew king from the Jebusites 3,000 years ago. Israel's archaeologists have lobbied parliament to prevent Sharon from bulldozing its remains.

Surrounded by these political niceties, many voters find it hard to form an opinion to feed into our endless polls — another feature of our democracy. Forecasts are also hampered by the refusal of the 280,000 immigrant voters from the old Soviet Union to reveal their political sympathies.

Another group, the settlers in the occupied territories, are deeply split: while half still support Likud, the rest disowned the party when it joined the US-sponsored peace talks last October. Their heart is with one of the eight ultra-right parties like Moledet, whose slogan is a 1960s quote from the late Labour leader Yigal Alon: "We must move the Palestinians to the Sinai desert. We are not doing enough to encourage their emigration."

What, of course, gets buried in the consequent speculations about which party will win — and what it must then do — is the news about the things we are already doing.

We are certainly jailing Palestinians at a staggering rate: 12,000 are held in our detention camps at the moment, many without trial, and a total of 122,000 have been arrested since 1987.

Torture, too, is widely used, and not just against dangerous terrorists. One 22 year old, Intisar al Kak, was accused of "membership in an illegal organisation" and had to give birth handcuffed to her bed in prison. She was lucky to survive: several healthy young men have, in the last year alone, died under interrogation.

Lastly there are the Israeli death squads in Arab disguise introduced by our army. These have so far killed 86 Palestinians wanted, in many cases, merely for "agitation".

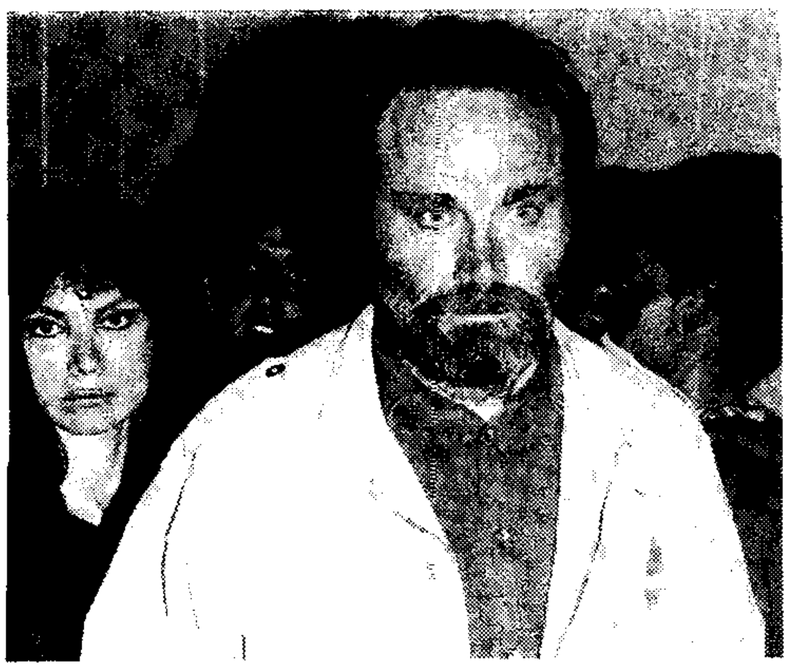
Naturally, such dictatorial measures are justified on security grounds, but many of us know that they actually escalate Arab-Israeli violence. They are certainly not something we would like the world, and especially the US politicians considering our various aid applications, to dwell on. It seems far wiser to highlight our democracy.

Alas, we may have overdone this point. Palestinian spokeswoman Dr Hanan Ashrawi has just announced that the Arabs in the occupied territories mean to hold elections for their own national parliament in September. This, of course, would be equally unacceptable to Labour and Likud. Since 1967, not just parliamentary elections but political parties, gatherings and even leaflets have been banned in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The need to scotch Ashrawi's plan might well unite the two parties. Since forecasts have given each only about a third of all seats, the winner will have to form a coalition anyway. In a "national unity government", neither will have to take full responsibility for repressive measures. Labour's leading dove, Avram Burg, has already endorsed the idea — presaging a limp ending to what outsiders thought was a decisive campaign.

Continuing the hugely popular Sunday Supplement feature you can read exclusively in every paper...

UP FRONTERS



Sexy **John Malkovitch** is obviously only here for the beard!? That's bad luck for **Bianca Jagger** who still can't get no satisfaction!! Is this a Liaison Dangereuse, it could end up a close shave for John!?

What a Rocky Horror Show!? It's **Richard O'Brien** giving newsreader Anna the bald facts!! She's got expensive tastes Richard, I hope you Canna Ford them!?!

She's always been his cup of tea!?!? And **Jane Asher's** got the recipe to make her cheesecake hubby **Gerald Scarfe** happy!! No wonder he has to draw the line!?

Zak Starr, son of Beatle Drummer, is a big noise in the pop world — or at least his outfit is!? No wonder he and **Catherine Zeta-Jones** are Darling Buddies of May!? Unlike Zak's jacket and tie they're a perfect match!! Go on, buy her a ringo!!

It's Newsnight for sexy **Catherine Zeta-Jones** and **Mr. P. Axeman**!! Don't grill her too hard Jeremy, she's still only a Darling Bud of May!?! *(You've already had this one, Ed)*

Nice to see vous, to see vous nice!! Is **Brucie** taking the Mike out of French singer **Jane Birkin**!?! Je t'aime Jane, but is this turning into a Forsyth Saga?! What a Birkin!

Who's got an Oscar on his mind?! It's **Danny De Vito** studying under Sir Peter!?! Perhaps he wants a place in the Hall of Fame as well?! Anyway, Sir Peter's only here for the beard!! *(You've done that one as well, Ed)*

(That's enough pisspoor captions by clapped out hacks to dreary PR photo's, Ed)

EBB TIDE
by ROBERT MAXWELL
A MODERN COMPOSITION FOR PIANO
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1810 Secretary: Mrs M Rose 2781
10th Teaching Room 2786
4 Teaching Room 1 2787
4 Teaching Room 2 2787
1810 Curator, Charles Moore Collection of Wind
Mr S Weston 2056/2781

To the Editor of the Sunday Telegraph

From Mr Peter Carter-Fuck

SIR — There has been much irresponsible speculation in the press about the possibility of Princess Diana suing for libel. As one of the world's leading experts in the field, I feel it is my public duty to inform the Princess that I can be contacted as follows:

Mr P. Carter-Fuck,
Carter-Fuck and Fartners,
Telex: HUGE FEE, LONDON.
Yours sincerely,
P. CARTER-FUCK,
"Writs-I Gottem",
Not-Very-Cheapside,
London.

The Vikings
IN THE age of heroes, all Europe lived in fear of the men from across the sea. Men such as Thorvill Skullsplitter whose very name turned blood to ice.
...And Ragnar Hairybreeks whose heart was blacker than a raven's eye.
But no Norseman compared to the most fearsome Dane of all... ERIK THE EUROSCEPTIC.
Will you join with us Erik as we set sail for Europe?
Mmm. I'm not sure actually. I'm not completely convinced that European political union is an acceptable option for a nation state with its own cultural identity which could easily be diluted by mainstream European influences such as...
By Odin! Think of the treasure! Think of the booty!
On the contrary, economically we would be better advised to eschew monetary union and preserve the autonomy of our own financial institutions.
Actually, he's got a point. I think I'll keep my skullsplitting skills for the home market.
Yes, you're right. There's bound to be some European regulation on hairybreeks.
And so Europe was reduced to chaos as the Danes stayed at home and old men told their children's children the terrible legend of Erik the Eurosceptic.

THE Sun
DAY TIMES
Friday, June 19, 1992

YES, IT'S ALL TRUE!

Why Can't They leave Her Alone?

THE PICTURE says it all. The grief-stricken princess can no longer hold back the tears as her inner torment wells up to tear her apart. Is it too much to expect Diana to be given a bit of peace?

The picture says it all — which is lucky, otherwise we'd have to write more of this bilge.

By Our Royal Staff
ANDREW MORTON, ANDREW NEIL and ANDREW PANDREW

YES, it's all true!

Everything we said yesterday is all true, we can reveal.

Every detail of the story in yesterday's paper has been authenticated as completely true, down to the smallest detail.

Sources close to ourselves confirmed last night that we are right in everything we have written.

Lies

Said one close friend of myself, who asked not to be named, "Your story is 100 percent true, and you are to be congratulated on a truly outstanding piece of journalism".

EXCLUSIVE

In Tomorrow's Soaraway *Sun-day Times* we reveal that everything contained in today's story is also true.

PLUS On other pages: Hundreds more Di photos and articles.

PLUS **Not** on other pages: ● Earth Summit ● Yugoslavia ● Maastricht Treaty ● Recession, etc., etc.

Your Sumo Questions Answered

with Old Basho

Q: I am confused. Whilst watching Day 14 of the current Grand Sushi Wotsupdok on Channel Four I couldn't help noticing that prior to the second Bilko the fifth ranking Zukini, Kentuki-chikin or "The Canary Wharf" as he is known made a left-handed Monosodiumglutamati manoeuvre less than twelve inches from the outer Rizzla. As a result his opponent the lower-ranking Bullshito, Kwasi-modo or "The Channel Tunnel" was left defence-less and had to resort to attempting a double linked Sanditoksvik. But to no avail. As the slow motion replay showed, the initial move was il-legal. Yet no disciplinary action was taken. Why is this?

Dave Anorak,
The Hushpuppy Estate,
Ilford, Essex.

Old Sumo: *Dear Grass-hopper, you forget the old Japanese proverb. "When fish is in the pot he is not swimming in the sea. When the blossom is on the cherry trees the old man puts his socks on. When the sumo is on the television everyone turns over to see what's on the other side". An-other saki please waiter.*

Q: My brother and I are keen devotees of sumo and never miss Channel Four's brilliant coverage. We even make videos of the programmes and send them to our pen pals in New Zealand. But we must ask your help to clear up one of the finer points of the final ranking, known to sumo lovers everywhere as the Birdsai.

Does a challenging Wheatabikki need eight out of seven Tofus to qualify prior to the final Kenko, or is a six-zero Telekom sufficient? Or is this the same thing depending on weight, age and overall Bonio?

Wayne Anorak,
The Hushpuppy Estate,
Ilford, Essex.

A: *Boy, this saki is strong. And I shouldn't have had all those Tempura Prawns to start with. What was your question?*

Q: Isn't sumo wrestling bril-liant? Don't you agree that all the people who say that is a waste of time and money are com-pletely wrong? I can think of no more satisfying en-tertainment than watch-ing Japan's top athletes engaged in their ancient and fascinating sport. My boys love it, which makes it a total family experi-ence. Congratulations Channel Four for a brave and inspired choice of TV sport!

Nigel Anorak,
Head of Sport,
c/o Channel Four,
Charlotte Street,
London.

(That's enough Sumo, Ed)

The Maastricht Treaty

Apology from the Conservative Party

IN recent months we may have given the im-pression that we supported the so-called Treaty of Maastricht. Indeed we may even have voted for it in the House of Commons, and assured voters in the general election that it was a great step for-ward in the adventure of building the New Europe and a personal triumph for the prime minister, Mr John Major.

We are now delighted and indeed over the moon to accept that the Treaty of Maastricht was nothing more than an unmitigated disaster, dreamed up by the power-crazed lunatic Jacques Delors and his unelected army of bureaucratic henchmen (Sir Leon Brittan) whose sole aim was to destroy Britain as we know it.

We would like to take this opportunity, given to us by those wonderful little Danes, to apo-logise unreservedly to the electorate for any con-fusion that may have arisen pursuant to our craven support of Major and Hurd during the run-up to the election when we thought we might lose our seats.

Lines To Commemorate The Possible Rift In The Marriage Of Their Royal Highnesses, The Prince And Princess Of Wales.

by The Poet Laureate

Old Warthog Drinks
Mudhole running dry. Snuffling snout.

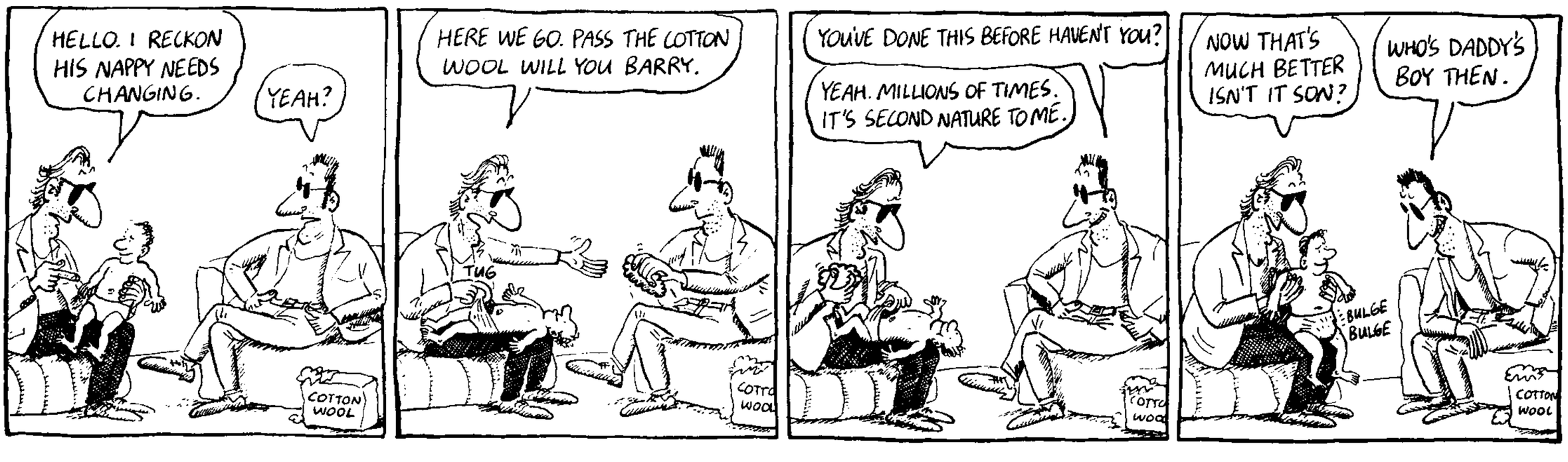
Grunt. Groan.
Dirt-caked skin. Piggy eyes stare.

Old Warty pretty hot.
Flea bites. Pain sears.

Warty scratches ear
With cleft foot.
Brain maddened. Dance
Of frenzy.

Warty has heart attack.
Keels over.
Poor old Warty.

Wiil This Do? Ted Whohes


HELLO. I RECKON HIS NAPPY NEEDS CHANGING.
YEAH?
COTTON WOOL
HERE WE GO. PASS THE COTTON WOOL WILL YOU BARRY.
TUG
YOU'VE DONE THIS BEFORE HAVEN'T YOU?
YEAH. MILLIONS OF TIMES. IT'S SECOND NATURE TO ME.
NOW THAT'S MUCH BETTER ISN'T IT SON?
WHO'S DADDY'S BOY THEN.
BULGE BULGE

IS IT THE END OF OUR BELOVED PRESS?

by Our Press Watching Staff

ONE of Britain's best-loved institutions is in crisis? Can the Royal press survive, after yet more *revelations about* the chaotic private lives of many of its senior members?

As he enters his 79th year, His Majesty the Digger seems to have lost all control over his younger employees, as they career from one scandal to another, leaving a train of marital disasters in their wake.

The Buck House Stops Here

There was a time when Royal watchers — men like Richard Dimbleby, Godfrey Winn and Kenneth Rose — were looked up to by the public, and carried out their duties conscientiously, untainted by scandal (except in the case of Godfrey Winn).

But today, as our picture-probe reveals, it is a different story.

Nigel Prince Dumpster. Balding, middle-aged, increasingly without a meaningful role, many observers wonder whether Prince-Dumpster will ever succeed in anything.

His marriage to the much younger aristocrat Lady Camilla has become a hollow sham. "They are never seen together in public," says a friend, "and they do not even share the same house."

Friends of Lady Camilla describe Dumpster as "vain, obsessed with publicising his cranky views in the media, cold, fish-like and utterly repulsive in every way."

Prince Andrew Neill. Balding, middle-aged, totally without a meaningful role, many observers are puzzled by the fact that, at the age of 46, Prince Neill is still unmarried. Although his name has been linked with many young women, such as call-girl Pamella Bordes, none of his liaisons seem to last. Friends are worried that the public will soon draw "the obvious conclusion".

Lord Rothermere. Fat, balding, and without a meaningful role, many observers wonder what the 86-year-old Lord Rothermere is for. His marriage to the boisterous, fun-loving "Bubbles" has long been a hollow sham,as she shamelessly befriends visiting Texan millionaires and indeed almost anyone else.

Princess Antonia Holden. One time Keeper of the Royal Unauthorised Biographies, the balding, middle-aged Holden has become an increasingly isolated figure, with no meaningful role.

As the first Royal biographer to have a much-publicised divorce, friends are worried that Princess Antonia spends all her time playing poker and writing mad letters to the *Times*, complaining that she is being persecuted by the Prince of Wales.

A Doctor writes

■ As a doctor I have often been asked in the last two weeks "why do I feel so sick, doctor?". The short answer is that you are almost certainly a victim of Bullshitia Murdocha, or "reading the papers", as it is more commonly known.

What happens is that the patient goes on a wild, compulsive binge, devouring huge quantities of junk and drivel about the Royal Family. After consuming several hundred columns of newsprint in a few hours, the patient then suddenly feels nausea, embarrassment and shame. In many cases they then throw up.

If you think you are suffering from bullshitia murdocha you should contact Andrew Neil immediately and be sick all over him.

© A Doctor.

I Say She Should Take A Year Off

writes
Glenda Slagg

THE career of columnist Annie Wilson of the Evening Standard threatens to become a national tragedy.

Day after day we read her sad outpourings in the press, and it is only too clear that the strain of life at the top is beginning to tell.

Once lively and vivacious, she enchanted the nation with her dazzling little essays in the Spectator about Lord Denning, here reporting some delightful tittle-tattle, there telling her readers what fun it would be to vote Labour.

But today we read nothing except tired old sentimental rubbish about the Royal Family.

There is only one solution. With Lord Rothermere's permission, Annie should be allowed to retire gracefully from public life for at least a year.

There, in her rose-entwined cottage in Oxfordshire, where doves coo in the immemorial water meadows, Annie can come to a sense of peace and solitude, undisturbed by editors ringing up every other minute demanding an 800-word Why Oh Why piece by 4 o'clock that afternoon.

© Dacretrash Productions

PETER McLIE

The World's Worst Columnist

FERGIE seems to be always in the news these days. You've only to pick up a paper and there she is, with all the details of her failed marriage.

And Princess Anne too is everywhere, isn't she, with stories of her romantic disasters.

But nowhere do we read about Princess Diana and her marriage to Charles.

Strange is it not?

Do you think a D-notice has been slapped onto our cowardly press?

☐ **I TURNED on the TV the other night to see yet another terrible programme, the latest in a long series of unwatchable efforts.**

Perhaps you were lucky enough like me to be out at the time it was on. Thank goodness some of us have better things to do than watch television.

☐ *A FRIEND of mine has come up with what I think is a wonderful idea to solve London's traffic problems. Trains running under- ground. Why has nobody thought of this before? It would be ideal with underground stations at regular intervals. With any luck there might be a station near my house, perhaps called "Notting Hill Gate".*

Wouldn't it just be fine and dandy?

(You're fired. Ed.)

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Monday

Today I am going camping with my friend Mr Bush at a place called Camp David.

Norman dug out my old Boy Scout tent and sleeping bag (not forgetting the ground sheet!). Imagine my disappointment when I found that we were staying in a big ranch, rather like a hotel.

Mr Bush seemed unusually pleased to see me, and only had to be told once who I was. He said he wanted my advice on the most important issue confronting the world today. Oh yes, I said, the rainforests — I have been fully briefed by watching Mr Porritt's television series, which my wife Norman thinks is even better than *The Bill*.

"No," he said, "I want to know how a no-hoper gets to win an election."

Everybody laughed, which showed once again how Mr Bush and I have a considerably special relationship. Oh yes.

Tuesday

I was woken up at 4 o'clock this morning to receive a 6-page fax from my friend Jeffrey Archer on Mr Bush's personal line. He has had a new idea for the ending of his novel about how the brilliant writer Godfrey Bowman gets a peerage. In the new version, Godfrey nearly commits suicide when he discovers that his name is not on the Dissolution Honours, but in the nick of time all is saved when his friend the prime minister, James Colonel, asks the Queen to put him on her Birthday List as Lord Archer of Grantchester. When I read out Jeffrey's fax to Mr Bush before our waffles-and-syrup clambake breakfast press conference, he eventually said that he couldn't take any more, presumably because it was so moving.

Wednesday

Today I am going to Rio, for a very important conference on saving the world. Everyone is agreed that something must be done, except Mr Bush. It is very difficult to know who I agree with. On the way we stopped in a country called Bogota, to look at a rainforest.

While we were there my friend David Mellor rang up to say that everyone had come out against the Maastricht Treaty, which I had done so much to sign. "Oh yes," I said, "I know all about the Danes. Mr Hurd told me that we didn't have to worry about them." "No, far worse," said David, "your so-called friends Norma Lamont, Michael Portfolio and Mr Lilley have stabbed you in the back while you were away, sir. They have all apparently said that perhaps Maastricht should be looked at again."

For once I began to sympathise with Mrs Thatcher, when she was betrayed when she went to France and lost her job. I decided that I would put my considerable foot down in no uncertain manner, which was in my judgement the only option on the agenda. I therefore called a special press conference in a hut in the rainforest.

Considering we were 500 miles from civilisation, it was very well attended by four men with chain saws, one of whom tried to sell me a small plastic bag full of self-raising flour, which seems to be very expensive here, at over 1,000 dollars an ounce. No wonder this country is in such a mess.

Eventually I was able to read out my statement in an even sterner voice than my stern voice, saying that everyone in the Cabinet completely supported my position on Maastricht, whatever it was. Unfortunately there was no time for questions, as the men started up their saws, saying they had to clear the rest of the rainforest before the Rio summit.

Thursday

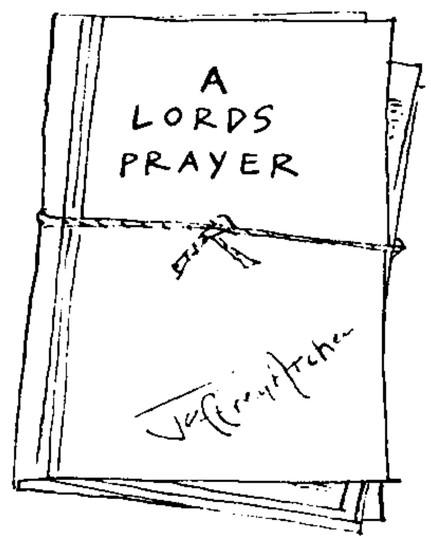
This morning I arrived in Rio and I was pleased to see all my old friends were there — Mr Kohl, Mr Mitterand and Mr Lubbers. This is very convenient as it means we can discuss the Maastricht Treaty. I tell them that I and my entire Cabinet are considering backing the Danes. People do not like the idea of a United Europe run by a lot of bureaucrats like M. Delors, I told Herr Kohl.

"You are beginning to sound like Mrs Thatcher," he said, giving me one of his not very funny looks. I gave his reply no small measure of prudent thought, and decided that perhaps Maastricht is a good idea after all.

Friday

Jeffrey rang me up to tell me that he has become a Lord! "That's amazing", I said, "It is just like in your book." He said "So it is, John, now you mention it. How incredible! I had never thought of it before. This often happens with Great Writers. You make something up and it turns out to be true".

The Honours List as a whole is very satisfactory indeed. Andrew Lloyd Webber, who wrote "Land of Hope & Glory", the Tory signature tune, is to become a knight. I was also pleased to see that lots of



cricketers were on the list. As I said to Mr Waldegrave when he brought in the chocolate HobNobs, "You see, we really are a classless society when someone like Jeffrey Archer can become a Lord". "Yes", he said, obviously not getting the point, "There's no class left."

Saturday

There are pictures today of Mrs Thatcher in the Falkland Islands looking pleased with herself. How typical! Just because she won a war ten years ago doesn't mean she should go on about it all the time. It would be like Mr Bush and me crowing over how we had defeated Saddam Hussein! You don't see pictures of me in Baghdad on the front pages of the papers, do you? Oh no.

DIEU ET MON DROIT

THE FUNDAY TIMES

19 JUNE 1992 Price 80p

Grave Constitutional Crisis Rocks Fairyland Over Funday Times Revelations

by Our Royalty Staff
Enid Blyton and Hans Christian Marriage

THE Funday Times's shock revelation that Prince Charming and his lovely bride did *not* live happily ever after, as revealed in last week's shock issue of the Funday Times, has exploded a time bomb under the whole edifice of the Fairyland monarchy.

Passages from the book *Sleeping Beauty — Her True Story*, published last week for the first time in the Funday Times, revealed to the world for the first time that:

- **Sleeping Beauty was only asleep for 100 years because she had taken a massive dose of paracetamol**
- **Prince Charming was cold and indifferent to his lovely bride, and frequently rode off into the forest to visit his close friend Camilla Parker-Rapunzel**
- **The Queen ruthlessly ignored the Princess's cries for help and continued to eat bread and honey in a callous manner**
- **In her distress Sleeping Beauty "binged" on pies stuffed with up to 24 blackbirds at a time**
- **The Princess's ugly sisters-in-law Fergiana and Anne, were allowed to get divorced but she wasn't.**

Close friends of Sleeping Beauty contacted by the Funday Times have confirmed that the story published last week by the Funday Times was totally accurate in every particular.

Grimm Stuff

Said one, who used to share a pumpkin with the Princess, "She used to be a fun-loving girl, who enjoyed balls and wearing glass slippers. But now she sits sadly in her turret, spinning a yarn which only the Funday Times is stupid enough to print in full".

How the rest of the world followed up the great Funday Times fairy story pp.6-9

Babes In Wood — Police baffled as search continues p.24

Is Houseowning Honeymoon Over For Three Little Pigs? p.25

Riding Hood Case — Wolf accused of date rape p.26

Hopes fade for injured egg man after wall disaster p.27

Unfunny Cartoon by Arthur Rackham p.28

Great Bores Of Today

"...He's fifty! tell me about it! it's unbelievable when you see pictures of him he looks about thirty and he hasn't really changed much but you'd have to say with due respect to the other two that his work with John was seminal they really changed the face of the whole music scene and the whole way people looked at the world everything about that album is unique the cover by William Blake is incredible and they were using techniques then you know that they've hardly even discovered today and George Martin was like a sort of conduit for all their originality have you ever been to Abbey Road? it's amazing you can see the actual studio where they recorded it and drugs were important there's no denying it let's face it "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" *is* LSD though at that time people didn't realise how dangerous drugs were still on "For the benefit of Mr Kyte" they laid down 24 backing tracks including a fairground synthesizer which took about a week and when you play it backwards you can hear them saying something like "Get out of Vietnam" or was that on the other one..."

GROCER HESS WAS MAD — NOW IT'S OFFICIAL

by Our History Staff
Hugh Very-Ropey, Regius Professor of Hitler Studies

AT LAST the mystery of the notorious one-man peace mission by Grocer Hess in November 1990 has been cleared up for once and for all.

When Grocer Hess flew in to Baghdad to negotiate peace terms with Saddam Hussein, many observers assumed that the former Fuehrer of the Conservative Party was acting on behalf of the British government.

Rudolf the Red-Faced Grocer

Now newly-discovered documents confirm what some suspected all along — that Grocer Hess was acting entirely off his own trolley (*shurely "bat"? Ed.*) as the result of a mad paranoid delusion that he was the most important person in the world.

In a letter to his gardener, a Mr Trevor Grove, dated November 1st 1990, Hess wrote:

"Mein Liebe Herr Grove,

At last I have a brilliant plan that will finish Thatcher for ever. She wants a world war against Saddam Hussein — but I will stop her with my brilliant plan. You will see, Herr Grove, when you open Der Sunday Telegraf Spee next week and see that I, Grocer Hess, have flown to Baghdad and brought off peace single-handed!

Then Mrs Thatcher will be the laughing stock of the world, and I will be the hero of the day!

Your devoted employer,
Sir Edward Hess (KG)

P.S. Do not forget my very important instructions about the compost heap."

"It's from a man accusing the press of treating him like royalty."

St Cakes School

The following awards have been made: Open scholarships (£3 per annum): M.P.J. Carter-Ruck (St Peter of the Injunction, Wimbledon), R.P.Q. Kwik-Fitter (The Tumbledown School, Shepton Mallet) L.B.W. Maastricht-Treaty (Merchant Bankers School, Manchester)

Closed Scholarships: The King Wafic Al-Mahq Thatcha Scholarship (£3,000 per day): Prince Mohammed Wafic Al-Mahq Thatcha (no relation) Riyadh Preparatory School for Boys (No girls ever).

The Bomber Harris Memorial Scholarship for Excellence in Saturation Bombing: No award this year.

The Doctor Germaine Greer Exhibition: Ms H.R.T. Clitoral-Orgasm (The Convent of the Blessed Esther, Woodlane)

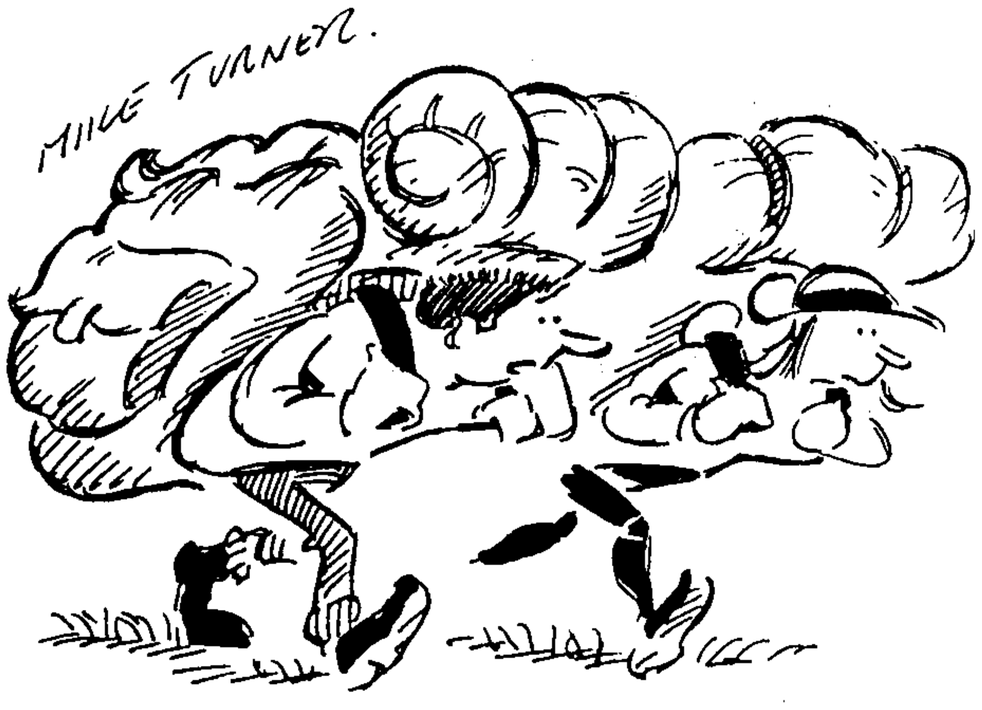
POETRY CORNER

Lines Written On The Closure Of Some Like It Hot

So. Farewell then
Some Like It Hot.
West End
Musical starring
Tommy Steele.

Obviously
Some did not like it.
Hot
or Not.

E.J. Thribb (aged 17½)



"...That's my philosophy too, see the world before you get burdened with personal possessions."

TV HIGHLIGHTS

HURD AND MAJOR

by P. G. Wodehouse

(Saxophone music)

Bertie Major is seated at the pianoforte playing "There Is Nothing Like A Dane". Enter Hurd, with tray of drinks.

Major: I say, Hurd, rum news about these Danish johnnies, eh what?

Hurd *(dropping tray)*: Indeed, sir.

Major: But last week, Hurd, you were telling me that everything was ticketty-boo on the gravy train to Euro-ville, and that these Danes would be giving us the jolly old thumbs up.

Hurd *(going red in face)*: It would appear, sir, that this is an instance of the phenomenon so perspicaciously described by the poet Burns, "The best laid plans of mice and men gang aft agly".

Major: I had no idea you spoke Danish, Hurd. What a dashed clever fellow you are.

Hurd: If you say so, sir.

Major: But seriously, Hurd, doesn't this leave us all in a bit of a hole? Don't the rules say that, unless all 12 countries are agreed, the whole thing goes up the spout?

Hurd: Indeed, sir, that is how it is put in the small print. But I am sure we should not be unduly troubled by such details. Denmark is after all, sir, a very small country.

Major: But dash it all, Hurd, these chaps had a vote. You can't ignore it. It wouldn't be cricket.

Hurd: Sadly not, sir, although there are still eleven men on the field, and there should therefore be no obstacle to continuing play. *(Laughs superciliously).*

Major: Are you trying to be funny, Hurd? You're fired.

Hurd: Very good, sir.

The End

Exclusive to Private Eye.
The serialisation of Silvie Krin's controversial account of a doomed relationship.
We print this story only as a matter of urgent public interest.

HAIR OF SORROWS

BY

SYLVIE KRIN

THE STORY SO FAR: The beautiful young Pamella is trapped in a loveless relationship with a man in a wig twice her age.

Now read on...

PAMELLA walked to the window of Andrew's fashionable Chelsea penthouse and gazed down sadly at the street below. Still dressed in her silk Atticus nightgown she sipped her bitter coffee and watched the children playing happily in the early morning sunshine.

Andrew had come in late and left early as was his wont. She couldn't remember the last time they had spent more than an hour together. He had tried to compensate for his absence by showering her with lavish gifts: A Magithatch food mixer; a canteen of solid silver cutlery from the Wapping Trading Company; a Bart Simpson Sky-TV doll which now reclined on the leopard skin sofa, its stuffing already coming out after only a day.

But all to no avail. Her loneliness only increased.

For company, Pamella crossed the room and idly switched on the radio.

"This is Andrew Neill. If you have any views on the EEC or anything else for that matter, call me now on..."

His soft Scottish brogue stumbled over the script. It was strange to hear his voice in this room which now they never shared.

How different it had been that magic night they first met in Tarts disco when he had come up to her at the bar and asked her how much she wanted. How long ago it all seemed.

"And now over to Laurie Henshaw at the AA. And then we'll be talking to Sir Eldon Griffiths about police recruitment."

She turned off the radio. Her day had now become a sad, lonely, routine waiting for Andrew to ring and say he would be staying late at Arso's, the exclusive Italian restaurant, where he would inevitably be meeting an important source on a big story for the *Sunday Times*.

Pamella wandered through the lounge with his exercise bike, his home karaoke set and the huge life-size photograph of himself with Rupert Murdoch at the launch of Sky-TV.

In the bathroom with its mirrored ceiling she opened his medicine cabinet, which was usually locked. But today he must have been in even more of a hurry than usual. She jumped back in horror as what appeared to be a number of dead hamsters fell out into the basin. Gingerly she picked one up which smelt strongly of superglue. On closer examination she discovered a small label sewn into the back of the furry object which read "Dr Pratt-Dumpster's Patent 'Lookreal' Hairpiece". And what was that on the shelf? A can of "Insto Hair". She read the instructions in disbelief. "Spray on head. Leave for 5 minutes. Then comb to the style of your choice. Highly inflammable. Keep away from naked flame."

A frown creased the silky tanned skin of Pamella's exquisitely formed forehead. What could it mean? What was Andrew up to? And what were those bottles? "Martian 8000: The Hairdye that makes you look as if you come from another planet".

Overwhelmed by her terrible discovery, Pamella stumbled into the bedroom and collapsed onto the circular tartan waterbed. She had to talk to him. Tell him of her loneliness, her fears, her insecurity. It would be a cry for help...

She picked up the bedside phone, one of the many in the flat shaped like a satellite dish, and dialled his number.

"Sorry, Mr Neill is at an important meeting," said the icy voice of Neill's secretary.

"But it's Pamella," she protested.

"Does he know you?" came back the reply.

Pamella thought for a second. *Does* he know me? Does he know anyone? But before she could reply the phone had gone dead.

Pamella was suddenly seized by an uncontrollable anger. The months of frustration, of neglect, of loneliness exploded. All those empty nights lying awake...

Without knowing what she was doing she seized a pair of scissors that lay on the dressing table and threw open the wardrobe doors.

There before her hung his priceless collection of shiny suits with their fashionable oriental labels.

Driven by her hurt and her pain, Pamella began hacking at the sleeves, the cuffs, the trouserlegs of the suits. Even the most intimate areas of the suiting could not escape her savage thrusts...

And then suddenly it was over. Pamella stood back and surveyed her ferocious handiwork. What had she done? What had possessed her? Everywhere was littered with torn fragments of pinstripe polyester. A label stared at her accusingly. "Made in Taiwan. Dry clean only."

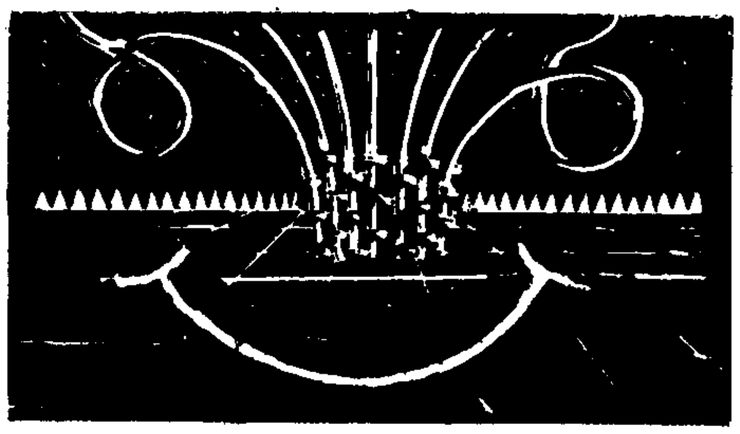
Slowly she became aware of the sound of the phone ringing. It was him. Andrew. Her mind raced. What could she say? The wigs? The suits? He would be furious. It would be the end...

She picked up the handset.

"Hello. It's Donald Trelford here. We met briefly at the Condom Club the other night. I wondered if you were doing anything at lunch. I'm not terribly busy myself..."

NEXT WEEK: Andrew calls in the lawyers and whinges about press intrusion of his privacy.

DIARY



JOHN OSBORNE

This miserable, god-forsaken, scummy and turgid world and its whole crumbling, worthless edifice is full of drab, bearded old men who spend their every day and night in their overlarge country mansions ceaselessly voicing their remorselessly solipsistic complaints about anything and everything. My God, they make me spew.

I wouldn't mind so much about their pitiful — and pitiless — whinings if they would only betray some small scrap of thanks for the lives they have been allowed to lead in this rain-soaked country. As they croak and stammer their grouchy misanthropies do they never stop to think of their bastard good luck? Do they never wonder, in their abject states of terminal loathing, at their absurd good fortune in being bred into a society that has for so long been reverential in its awe at their worthless, cackhanded and — what's more — painfully verbose diatribes? Pardon me while I puke.

I live in Shropshire, a clear four hours by motor-car from the moral squalor and dyslexic caterwaulings of literary (*sic*) London and all its smug, oily, bourgeois, "caring" shams. This lets a playwright — probably the finest living playwright — see things in a clear light, untainted by the jaundiced carpings and insidious world-weary cynicism of the assorted hacks, homosexuals and hobgoblins who inhabit the steamy cesspit of crass neanderthal joylessness that is the mouldy metropolis.

In the country I garden, I birdwatch, I walk. At this time of year, gardening becomes an almost superhuman chore, for there are suddenly so many flowers, with their vulgar, garish and heartless colours, for me to behead with my gardening axe. Birdwatching, too, becomes an increasingly exhausting activity. No sooner have I clapped eyes on one pretty bird than another pokes it beak in, and the gun must be reloaded. Of my three pastimes, only walking produces the necessary rhythm for true contentment. I climb the empty hills behind my house with firm, heavy paces, each well-placed tread killing off a worm, a louse or a horribly green and spindly piece of grass. When I start to flag, I think of each fresh patch of earth as an ex-wife's face, and a new spring enters my step. How blissfully distant one feels from the moral turpitude of the city when out relaxing in the true English countryside!

All my life, I have been forced to put up with a concerted media campaign against me. For my first twenty-odd years, the national newspapers and their proprietors were hell-bent upon ignoring me and printed not a measly word that I said, so that many people on the international stage knew nothing of my existence. Then, when my first masterpiece, *Look Back In Anger* established me as the foremost playwright of all time, they were unable to ignore me. Instead, they attempted to slur my reputation with half-hearted compliments, e.g. "*one of* our most promising young playwrights" (my italics) and "*arguably* the most eloquent voice *of his generation*".

These days, they have had to adopt new tactics to propagate their slimy traduction, heaping their lily-livered abuse on me in their malignant "interviews" and "profiles". The corruption of these hacks and their brutish foreign puppeteers is so bland and remorseless that it's like confronting an advanced form of madness. Only yesterday, a vile little rat of a journalist sidled up to me and said — without any provocation whatsoever — "I enjoyed your play, Mr Osborne. Can I buy you a drink?"

"You what?" I replied, signalling my displeasure with a left hook to his stomach. But his malice was so all-consuming as to withstand my rebuff.

"I enjoyed your play, Mr Osborne," he choked, "Can I buy you a drink?"

"Champagne," I replied. After much ostentatious scrabbling about in his pocket for change, he at last gave me my glass of champagne, which I immediately took to another room and was able to drink in some measure of privacy.

You will have by now guessed the outcome. The next day, I looked through all the newspapers, only to find — you've got it — that *there was no mention of me whatsoever*. It was as if I had never met the journalist, nor accepted his cheap champagne. This is how that viperous rabble of paid hacks repay one's trust. Never again.

Current objects of detestation: divorcees whose bitterness inclines them to defile their ex-spouses with words of self-deceiving ugliness; men with whiskers; arrogant theatrical has-beens who can't understand why famous actors run a mile from their boorish ranting plays; old Garrick Club members who pose for photographs in bow-ties of a vile purple so as to make themselves look like marvellous old characters; ageing children who can't stand on their own two feet, preferring to blame mummy and all other women for everything; writers so rankly bereft of new ideas that they put their sluggardly hands into smelly bottom drawers in order to rework their tedious past triumphs; touchy old men full of a self-loathing misdirected at others less fortunate than themselves; revolting ranters whose tiny little minds are clogged with the opinions voiced in *The Daily Mail* correspondence columns of twenty years ago.

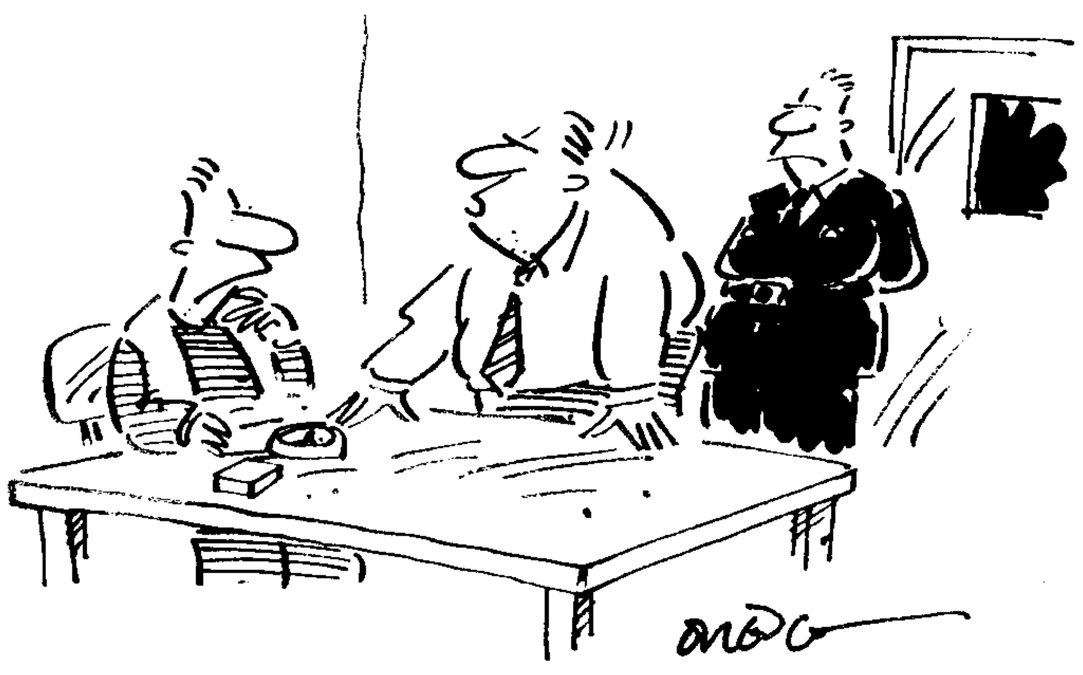
No doubt the theatre historians (God rot them) will be debating the nature of the character progression from *Look Back In Anger* to my new work *Déja Vu* for centuries to come. But I wonder if members of that sullen and pernicious profession are wholly qualified in their squalid sinecures to speak of the noble intricacy of such lines as:

Cliff: God, can't you do anything but go on about your dirty socks? Pass the mug of coffee, there's a love, Alison. Oh, hell. (*Look Back In Anger* [1956], Act II, Scene ii)

and (from *Déja Vu*, 1992):

Cliff: He's not going on about his dirty socks again, is he? Makes you want to reach for the nearest mug of coffee, it really does. Pass it to me, Alison, there's a love. Oh, bloody hell.

As I have made clear in countless lectures, speeches and interviews on my writing over the past forty years, I never speak in public about my own work. But only the most idle of the critical morons could fail to spot its current zest and originality, even genius, stuff the bloody lot of them.



"Anything I say will be taken down and used in evidence against you..."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

From Sir Herbert Gussett

SIR — Like millions of other loyal Englishmen, when I first heard the news of the Sunday Times's disgraceful, nay treasonable decision to publish these libellous attacks on the private life of our Royal Family, I decided there and then to cancel my order for that abominable rag, and never to allow it into my house again. Imagine my horror and distress to find that my dear wife, whose name escapes me, had behind my back gone down to the Village Stores and purchased a copy of the offending paper, thus obliging me to read every word of this vile trash, in order to justify the outlay of 80p. Were this tragic misunderstanding to re-occur this weekend, I would be powerless to stop it. Thus are empires lost.

yours faithfully
SIR HERBERT GUSSET
The Nuthouse,
Barking Osborne,
Salop.

Literary Review

Dog daze

Black Dogs
Ian McEwan
(Cape, £13.99)

TWO YEARS on from *The Innocent*, Cape is giving Ian McEwan the Martin Amis treatment. For the uninitiated, the Martin Amis treatment consists of bulking out a 40,000 word novella — such an *effort*, this writing business — to maximal length, in this case 174 pages, so you can charge a wallet-lightening fourteen quid for it.

It also consists of dispensing with any sort of exterior description of the book's contents, the implication being that these boys are now so famous we really don't need to know piddling details like what they're writing about, we can just take the stuff on trust.

Ian McEwan's novels — five of them now since the painfully wrought miniature of *The Cement Garden* back in 1978 — are generic. Their characteristic is that they resemble other novels by Ian McEwan. What can be said about them, consequently, are the same things, only on this occasion more so. Thus:

1. *He writes about boring people.* This year's models are an excruciating couple called Bernard and June Tremaine — he an ex-Communist turned intellectual Labour MP eager to witness the destruction of the Berlin wall at first hand, she a dying mystic obsessed by an encounter with the beasts of the title (on honeymoon in the Languedoc in 1946) that apparently revealed to her the nature of evil. Jeremy, the fortysomething son-in-law, a left-liberal publisher of educational textbooks and fascinated amanuensis — he is supposed to be writing a memoir of June — lacks even his subjects' occasional gestures at vitality.

2. *He writes about them in a boring way.* Mostly through dialogue of the breast-beating, super-revelatory and quite implausible sort. A page-long disquisition from June on her deathbed, endless self-justifying monologues from Bernard as he rambles round Berlin in November 1989. Jeremy, trying hard to reconcile the couple's opposed views of one another, chips in with bromides such as "Isn't it for the best if some journey inwards while others concern themselves with improving the world? Isn't diversity what makes a civilisation?" To which June accurately replies: "Jeremy, you're a dear old fruit, but you do talk such twaddle."

3. *The architecture is even more boring. Black Dogs* swiftly declares itself as a contest between Bernard's rationalism and June's spiritual journey after truth, her conviction that the honeymoon encounter brought her "face to face with evil", his dismissal of the whole business as "religious cant". Two entrenched positions, bereft of compromise, sustained investigation and, consequently, interest.

4. *He is still, at times, a terrific writer.* Describing Jeremy alone and terrified in a silent French farmhouse, recreating June's horror as the giant dogs lope hungrily towards her on the path, McEwan is adept at conveying physical sensation. The last-page unravelling, when the dogs — Gestapo trained — are linked with the revival of Nazi sentiment witnessed by Jeremy on his trip with father-in-law (when Bernard narrowly avoids being beaten up by Fascist thugs) is brilliantly done, and the final sentence — in which June dreams of the dogs' retreat "into the foothills of the mountains from where they will return to haunt us, somewhere in Europe, in another time" — quite masterly.

Ça suffit!, to use a catchphrase that recurs throughout the text. Examining the cragged, ageing visage that stares from the jacket, you are struck by how rapidly the whirligig of time brings in its revenges. Look back only a decade and a half and what were our bright young middle-aged novelists up to? Amis was writing his fine early novels; McEwan had just published *First Love, Last Rites*; Ackroyd was distinguishing himself as a slashing reviewer. And what are they now, other than fodder for the Young Turks? Go on boys, kick over the statues!

The cover is excellent.

BOOKS & BOOKMEN

MAGAZINE WORLD

■ VICKI WOODS, editor of *Harpers & Queen*, has become more and more erratic.

The latest *Harpers* contains a delirious piece by Woods about the joys of motherhood. "As we spiral towards the millennium," she trills, "babies become more and more desirable. Even pregnancy, the naked bulge itself, is suddenly sexy." Indeed, Woods had promised her deputy editor Lucinda Bredin that she could return to her job after taking maternity leave, but when it came to firming up the deal she was characteristically evasive.

A few weeks before Bredin was due to have her baby, she sent a memo to managing director Terry Mansfield inquiring what her position was (which she copied to Woods). As a result, Woods refused to talk to her (their desks are next to each other, but rather than exchange any words with Bredin, Woods stayed away from her own desk, establishing beachheads all over the office, phoning her secretary from the cafe across the road, and other similar absurdities.

Bredin was then peremptorily sacked by Woods. Outraged, Bredin's husband, Bruce Palling, immediately went into action, as did other senior figures within National Magazine Company who felt Woods had behaved appallingly. Terry Mansfield has since offered Bredin a position elsewhere in the organisation when she returns.

□ **IT IS appropriate that the *Writers & Artists' Yearbook* should list Michael O'Mara's specialities as "royal books, murder and mystery anthologies".**

If managing editor Mary Anne Sanders had not died, it is unlikely Andrew Morton's "anthology" about the Wales's marriage would have been published, at least by thrice-married O'Mara.

It would certainly not have been published by the Chappeople, Ian and Marjory, who were bemused to read in last week's *Daily Mail* that *Highgrove: Portrait of an Estate*, "Prince Charles's account of his career as an estate manager and organic farmer", was to have been published by the smooth O'Mara, "but will now be placed elsewhere".

The book has always been under contract to Chapman's and will be published next spring, if they get the manuscript.

■ PUBLISHERS are so much on the run these days there are unlikely to be many complaints at the ridiculous results of the survey conducted by the Society of Authors and the Writers' Guild as to the "best" and "worst" publishers.

The "best", according to the authors, is Sinclair-Stevenson, no doubt because he overpaid them and went out of independent business in record time, being bought by Reed International, three of whose imprints are adjudged almost the worst of seventy.

Constable is seventh best, most of its authors no doubt being grateful to be published at all. Bloomsbury won't appreciate being 28th equal (with Random Century, now to be known as Random House, as everyone must forget that the Cheetham's Century ever had anything to do with it). Faber will hate being 37th equal, with Hodder & Stoughton. And the BBC will, no doubt, be relieved to be as high as 43rd equal. What can it all mean?

□ *RICHARD CHARKIN, hit man at Octopus, is not amused that his authors rate the Reed International imprints so meanly: Secker & Warburg comes 34th equal (with Piatkus); Methuen 46th; Heinemann 60th (neither firm has any functioning editors left, which cannot help); Mandarin and Minerva 67th.*

As a result, John Potter, abrasive Australian boss of trade publishing, is having to kowtow to Sir Sincere-Stevenson's financial wizard, Yorkshireman Peter Tummons, who was brought in too late to bolster up the new publishing house's fortunes but who is trying to keep Octopus's authors sweet.

Potter will also have to curb the ambitions of the dogged Mary Harpley, his Queen of the Night and director of marketing, serialisation and design.

'Bookworm'

SNIPCOCK & TWEED
ALL YOU JOURNALISTS QUESTIONING DIANA'S FRIENDS ABOUT HER RELATIONSHIP WITH CHARLES: DON'T YOU EVER THINK OF THE CHILDREN?
OF COURSE, YOU'RE RIGHT!
DIANA AND CHARLES: THE TRUT
OI! WILLS! HARRY! WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR PARENTS' CRAPPY MARRIAGE?

RIO ROUND-UP

Indians and the cowboys...

BRITAIN'S pledge to help the Xingu Indians in Brazil's Mato Grosso with contributions to their medical services is horribly ironic — it was Europeans who infected the tribes in the first place.

The Portuguese and the French, in their eagerness to possess Rio, would leave clothes dripping with smallpox near Tupi tribal villages to wipe out as many Indians as possible. This may explain why there were hardly any Tupi tribes at the recent convention of indigenous groups in Rio.

The survivors of the once friendly coastal tribes escaped rampaging slave traders and misguided missionaries only to fall into the arms of their enemies, the Ge tribes. These, by contrast, were better represented — by the powerful Cayapo, who wore ceremonial dress and warpaint, perhaps to warn off invaders who are contaminating their rivers with mercury.

Only a handful of the 200,000 Indians who have survived from the estimated 20 million in 1500, attended the convention in the Kari-Oca village of Jacarepagua. They were strangely sober, remembering perhaps their once healthy ancestors who had been wiped out by foreign illnesses for which they had no immunity such as syphilis and other sexually transmitted diseases, smallpox, tuberculosis, meningitis, measles, and chicken pox. Aids has yet to come.

Now that there are few Indians left to wipe each other out and their forest is rapidly disappearing, their territory is reduced to reserves which they are obliged to share with other previously hostile tribes. The Xingu reserve, for example, includes Indians from the four main tribal groups who regularly receive ogling visitors from overseas for whom they perform ceremonial dance routines. In return, visitors bring more diseases like influenza and the common cold.

Foreigners who spread their diseases among tribespeople are often rewarded by discovering that these primitive people have herbal remedies which can cure their own foreign ailments. American and Japanese businessmen are currently rushing to patent a cure for rheumatism, recently discovered in a remote corner of the Amazonian jungle.

Some half dozen Tukano, present at the convention, complained that *garimpeiros* looking for minerals were illegally invading their villages on the higher Rio Negro and spreading malaria. One victim told the *Eye* that all 300 of his tribespeople had suffered from the disease and that he himself had caught it four times.

The Indian convention in the Colonia Juliana Moreira might have been more successful if officials in Rio had not left their phones unattended for days. Officials had not made it clear that the Colonia was some 30 miles from Rio at the end of a dirt track which was still being flattened by a huge steamroller on the day of the convention.

As press vehicles of every kind competed with the steamroller for wheelspace, hacks, anthropologists and ethnologists wandered around in a daze, mostly forgetting to talk to any Indians. In the general apathy, one Guarani chief told everyone he was too busy to talk and spent hours instead eating his lunch. Another, more amenable, Caioua chief was so grateful for *Eye* contact that he jumped out of his tribal dance routine to give his telephone number.

The Global Forum in Rio's Hotel Gloria was equally chaotic. The director and deputy director of the Forum's international press centre were in hiding and phones were threatened with disconnection through lack of funds. Someone had spent the money on a Ferrari Testarossa.

A friendly official, Lorenzo Claudio Barreiros, later warned the *Eye* about the dangers of trying to give money to Indians: "Of every $100 given to the Indians maybe 80 per cent disappears en route. If Britain wants to send any money to them she should send someone to Brazil to visit the tribe and help them open an account at their nearest bank."

ARMS

Rooker Memorandum

MORE than two years ago, a strange document arrived at Westminster addressed to Jeffrey Rooker, a Birmingham Labour MP and then a prominent backbench critic of the Government.

Rooker had made his name pursuing the Government over an assortment of scandals, and at that time was a member of the public accounts committee (PAC), which pretends to safeguard the public purse against abuse. Rooker had been harassing ministers and civil servants with awkward questions about arms deals to the Middle East.

The document, which was anonymous, took the form of a corporate memorandum to a chairman whose name was deleted, as was the name of the sender. The copy number was also deleted, and it was headed "classification restricted". The date was 2 May 1989, and the subject (of great interest to recent *Eye* readers) was: "Newspaper articles on BAe and HMG bribes to obtain Tornado etc business".

The two-page memo was split into three parts, headed Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Malaysia.

Much of what the memorandum says has been written about over the years in *Private Eye*, and by far the most fascinating parts refer to the then prime minister and her family.

On reading this remarkable document, Rooker put it in an envelope and sent it to Mrs Thatcher, explaining that he did not intend to pass on unchecked and unsolicited information. Thatcher thanked him brusquely and told him the letter had been "passed to the appropriate authorities". Somehow, two years later, someone (perhaps even a representative of the appropriate authorities) has sent the memo and its history to *Private Eye*.

Is the memo the work of some fraudster, putting together material from newspaper articles and stirring up trouble? It could be. But the fraudster would need to have been a fairly good predicter of the future.

In view of all the curious developments accurately predicted by the author of the "Rooker memorandum" and the continuing interest in the story, perhaps the appropriate authorities should look at the matter afresh.

Currying Favour

MASSIVE profits in the arms trade are not only to be made in the Middle East — India can be a pretty good bet, too.

The new Indian defence minister, Sharad Pawar, has been sending messengers to meet the arms dealers in London, Paris and Munich. Obviously hefty "commissions" are involved, but this deter no one. So far Matra of France and Defax, the Spanish company, have been signed up, with British Aerospace and the French firms Aerospatial and Giant merely approached.

British Aerospace is keen to sell aged Hawk trainers to the Indian air force, but it will have to beware the "commission" problem as highlighted by the long-running and ongoing Bofors scandal (see *Eyes passim*).

As recently as 5 June a secret court session was convened in Geneva to hear an application from the Indian government relating to the discovery of bank accounts in the city held on behalf of various Indians, including the late Rajiv Gandhi. The Indian government wanted to discover further the degree to which its politicians and senior civil servants had been bribed by the Swedish firm, Bofors, to buy Swedish 105mm Howitzers.

The Indians are particularly looking into the role of the Hinduja family and its mega rich company, Sangam Ltd, a subsidiary of holding company, Gotco. Apart from the four Hinduja brothers named in the documents, several other companies are also mentioned.

The Hindujas have a large operation in Britain and our own prime minister, nice Mr Major, has been to functions organised by them. No doubt the Tory Party has benefited from this close relationship.

Meanwhile the Indian prime minister, Narashima Rao, has an embarrassing friend in the guru Chandra Swami. Not only is he a friend of Tiny Rowland and Adnan Khashoggi, but he is claiming a "special relationship" with Rao that can be used to procure defence contracts. For a fee.

PROPERTY

Accountability Hall

WHILE the campaign gathers pace to move the London School of Economics to County Hall, opposite the Houses of Parliament, at the expense of the building's Japanese buyers, a number of points about the sale need to be raised.

The fate of the site, former home of Ken Livingstone and the Greater London Council, now lies in the hands of the London Residuary Body, a superquango set up by the Government in 1986 to dispose of GLC assets after Red Ken's sacking.

For the last six years the residuary body has allowed the GLC's old fortress to fester on the south bank of the Thames, a cruel reminder of what happened to those who dared taunt Thatch. Earlier this year a little-known Japanese company, Shirayama of Osaka, negotiated with the LRB to buy the Riverside building, the main block of the complex, and develop it into a hotel with conference centre and office space — offices being just what London needs, of course.

As part of the deal, struck just weeks before the election, a clause was inserted allowing a new government to pull County Hall out of the sale. The LRB-Shirayama deal caused much flak from a number of bodies, including the capital's heritage lobby and the pipped prospective buyers, the London School of Economics. What was odd was that the LRB had agreed to sell the Riverside block without its attendant buildings.

Board chairman Sir Godfrey Taylor had previously stated that he would *not* sell County Hall in parts. Indeed, he told one reporter that he had warned the London School of Economics, six months before the Shirayama deal was struck, that "one of the criteria for selling County Hall is that the complex of buildings has to be sold in one go and not piecemeal". The LSE wants the whole site, not just Riverside. When asked why he had made this comment, Sir Godfrey remarked, strangely, that the market had "changed a lot since then. We are in the middle of a desperate recession."

So perhaps the LSE can't match the financial clout of the Japanese investors? Although County Hall is a public asset and proceeds from its sale will be shared between London's 32 boroughs, the LRB, surprisingly, is refusing to reveal Shirayama's price. Rumours are circulating that the deal totals anything between £60 million and £200 million.

The LSE wants to stump up £20 million cash now and £50 million later, and to use the proceeds of the sale of its current site to turn County Hall into a "centre of excellence" for the social sciences, complete with a library, available to the public and with research facilities for politicians. As yet there has been no official backing for the LSE bid. Surely the Government can't be worried that if the LSE moves in, County Hall will soon be emblazoned with banners, a la GLC, proclaiming anti-Major sentiments?

The residuary body, meanwhile, is obliged to extract the maximum price for any capital sales. It has just sold Jubilee Gardens on the nearby South Bank complex to the Arts Council... for £2.

RACE RELATIONS

Rum Brum...

THE RACE relations industry is booming in Birmingham — particularly in the city's social services department where bosses have done the politically correct thing and decided that all white people are racist and must be "retrained".

A bizarre network of companies has sprung up to service this new-found need. White employees ordered on to the courses have been shouted at, accused of being racist and even spat at by their *self-appointed* "trainers". Some even needed psychiatric counselling after their courses.

One course at Small Heath social services saw team leader Jim Barlow issuing a memo ordering all whites to attend on pain of disciplinary action — black and Asian workers were "warmly welcomed". Another saw trainer Ali Jan Haider running a course at the same office which left staff in tears and at loggerheads. One has even been suspended for alleged racist remarks.

Haider, for his part, has been told that his services are no longer required — but not before he had charged £1,648 for four days' work. Now *Eye* inquiries into Haider and his company, Positive Action 2001, have revealed an intricate web of anonymous companies.

PA 2001's directors are Haider, Muhammed Salim Khan and Yashwant Patel. The company has no telephone number and is registered at a solicitor's office in Cheshire. The same three are also directors of Leicester-based SY Associates, which has also been employed by Birmingham's social services department for "counselling". It doesn't have a listed phone number either.

All three have also been employed in various capacities on an individual basis — not through their companies — by Birmingham social services. Khan and Patel are also directors of another two companies with similar aims, Jaineesha Associates International and Mohsin International.

The contracts were awarded without the normal tendering process and without having to be approved by the social services committee. Strangely, most were in Small Heath. Under the cover of various names and companies, therefore, the three have been paid thousands of pounds for their courses. Luckily, the courses are absolutely vital and of the highest calibre, so there is no danger of the second city's needy social services clients feeling short-changed.

Elsewhere in the city, meanwhile, the recent collapse of the Community Relations Council has exposed huge grants paid to obscure ethnic minority groups — all part of the honourable backscratching tradition of Birmingham politics.

Few, however, realised how much money was involved. The Community Relations Council's blackballing by the Commission for Racial Equality revealed that £200,000 *had been* poured down the drain simply to support political ambition.

The CRC's power-crazed chairman, Saeed Abdi, took it over in late 1990 and promptly put an end to democracy by blocking all meetings of its ruling council, despite a constitution which demanded at least six a year. Its staff were left without work or instructions and have been twiddling their thumbs for most of the year.

Abdi's reduction of the CRC to chaos was followed by the resignations of most of its ruling council and their replacement by Labour party lackeys. Eventually even the CRE, itself hardly a paragon of efficiency, realised something was wrong and cut off its £114,000 annual contribution — leaving staff without wages.

Now Abdi has given six racial equality officers three months' notice — without even enough money to pay their remaining wages and redundancy. This means he could be sued personally by the workers' union.

Gray tried to come to his rescue by ordering cash be diverted from other council areas, but that was too much even for Labour leader Sir "Dick" Knowles and he was ordered off the case. Now Abdi is off the council, the CRC has been closed, Gray is facing Abdi's recriminations for not delivering — and six people have lost their jobs.

POLICE 5

Trouble 't Mills...

THERE'S something odd in the timing of the announcement by the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) that corruption charges will be brought against three Greater Manchester police officers who were involved in the controversial jailing of former constable Ged Corley (see *Eyes passim*).

Ex-Greater Manchester chief superintendent Arthur Roberts, former inspector Peter Jackson and serving detective Kevin Ryan are to appear at Wakefield magistrates' court this month to answer charges of perjury, misconduct and perverting the course of justice.

Roberts and Jackson led the 1989 investigation which saw Corley jailed for 17 years for supplying weapons to criminals. Less than a year later he was freed after it had been shown that he may have been jailed on the evidence of unreliable "supergrasses" involved in a plot to discredit the Greater Manchester force, and last April he received £230,000 compensation from Greater Manchester police's insurers for wrongful imprisonment.

Interestingly, summonses were issued against the Manchester Three only two days after the DPP had incurred much public hostility by whitewashing, er, that is exonerating officers from the disbanded West Midlands serious crime squad. Jackson discovered he was to be charged from Steve Panter of the *Manchester Evening News*. Who told Panter? Not many people outside the DPP's office could have known.

So perhaps the timing was an unfortunate coincidence? The DPP has had since June 1989 to come up with charges against the Manchester officers; the inquiry into the disgraced West Midlands force began *after* the investigation of the Corley case officers and covered far more individuals.

So what took the DPP so long? A clue may be provided in a letter written by new DPP boss Barbara Mills to the *Independent*, a few days later. Obviously rankled by public disgust at the lack of prosecutions arising from the West Midlands debacle, Mills whinged "a number of comments have been made... that the Crown Prosecution Service will not prosecute police officers. That is patently untrue. Only today the CPS decided to prosecute two former and one serving Greater Manchester police officers in connection with the Corley case."

Her choice of words is unfortunate. Cynics could now accuse the DPP of using the Manchester officers as scapegoats for the West Midlands fiasco. Or perhaps the DPP saw the opportunity of burying the latest developments in the Corley affair among the findings of the West Midlands inquiry, knowing that the papers would be awash with news of the latter at the expense of the less-discussed Corley inquiry.

PRISONS

Hanging debate

WHAT ROLE, albeit unwitting, did the authorities at Armley jail, Leeds, play in the suicide of 21-year-old remand prisoner Adam Jacklin? Just four days after being admitted to the squalid Victorian pile, Jacklin became the eleventh inmate in the past four years to commit suicide there.

Among the questions to be answered is why had he been placed in prison at all. The young desperado was remanded in custody by Wakefield magistrates to await trial on a charge of criminal damage — for allegedly breaking a window.

Once he arrived at the nick, however, he became the responsibility of the prison authorities. They are supposed to screen new arrivals for suicide risks, and in Jacklin's case this shouldn't have been too difficult. The day before being sent to Armley, he had been taken to hospital by police... after trying to kill himself. "In effect, he had a label attached to him declaring 'I am a suicide risk'," said his solicitor, Graham Stowe.

But the prison and its much-vaunted Suicide Prevention Management Group ignored the "label" and a young man was able to hang himself with a bed sheet.

ORIMULSION

NATIONAL POWER
POWERGEN

All burned out?

THE notorious substance orimulsion has now been burned at the Richborough power station in Sandwich, east Kent, for the last two years. Supposedly yet another source of cheap fuel for electricity generation (like nuclear, for example), the experiment has caused widespread concern and controversy.

Throughout the past month it has become clear that a vast amount of compensation has been paid out since the experiment started. PowerGen, the station's owner, will neither confirm nor deny a mooted figure of £6.5 million.

What is certain is that it is not just the local Friends of the Earth who now want a proper investigation and inquiry into this noxious muck from Venezuela. Calls for real information have come from all shades of opinion: Thanet and Dover district councils; local MP David Shaw; businesses adjacent to the station itself; the local farming lobby and community groups worried about the effects on children and the elderly.

Curiously, orimulsion-burning is the only experiment not to have featured in PowerGen's dire advertising campaign. This campaign draws attention to the fact that the company's boffins have just discovered that it is possible to burn domestic rubbish, and that there is no need, therefore, to import it from the other side of the world. These are perhaps the first positive signs that orimulsion will be ditched.

WATER

Passing the bucket...

IAN BYATT, boss of OFWAT, the water watchdog, made it plain when presenting his annual report that he was not thinking of requiring drought-hit water companies to buy in supplies from regions where there may be surpluses.

He was asked about those districts where people were forbidden to use hosepipes on one side of the street while neighbours on the other side splashed away merrily. He said pipes were not readily available to transfer water and delivering it by road or sea tanker was "extremely expensive".

As to the very generous share options handed out to chairmen and other executives in the new privatised monopolies, he said feebly: "My job is to set price levels. It is for the companies to deliver as best they can. If they consider their executives are worth a lot of money, that is a matter for the shareholders."

Customers, on the other hand, might think that the gifts being distributed to the people at the top could more properly be used to pay for shiploads or lorryloads of water, and for emergency action to reduce the leakage of between a quarter and a third of the water sent out from the pumping stations. Meanwhile, stock up while supplies last.

In the City

WORD HAS IT that the leading US bank Citibank may have uncovered a nasty little internal problem. So much so, it is even rumoured that the bank has hired private investigators to check into allegations of kickbacks and insider dealing involving foreign exchange trading in London.

No doubt allegations of payments from certain clients for information and preferential dealing treatment will turn out to be totally untrue. So too will suggestions that forex deals have been done on a "front-running" basis ahead of the bank, or that profits have been shared with clients.

Those in the City who know Citibank and its highly respected foreign exchange department will rightly disregard such allegations as malicious, ill-informed gossip which any investigation will prove to be wholly unfounded.

THE GROWING involvement of the Government in the Maxwell scandal — helping to bail out the pensioners; appointing department of trade and industry inspectors to probe the *Mirror* flotation; being lobbied for pressure on Liechtenstein and Switzerland; and receiving GCHQ telephone taps about Cap'n Rob's (*sic*) activities — is threatening to put a blow torch to the soles of certain feet at the Serious Fraud Office.

Demands for government action make the SFO's line that arrests are "several months" away increasingly politically unwelcome.

The SFO has been on the case for more than six months and while there is a dense paper trail, many numbers still to crunch and evidence needed from abroad, the pressure for action is likely to become increasingly vocal — especially with Kevin and Ian Maxwell acting and living as if it is business as usual.

While it has been expected that arrests will be made before the first anniversary of the Cap'n's unlamented watery demise in November, that may no longer be soon enough now that taxpayers' money has had to be used to bail out the Maxwell pensioners. Political pressure to "get the handcuffs on" Kevin Maxwell in particular, together possibly with brother Ian and Maxwell cronies Michael Stoney and Larry Trachtenberg, could become irresistible for the SFO.

One possible way to ease that pressure could be to feel a few Maxwell collars over the simplest of the frauds under investigation — the deception of the Swiss Bank Corporation. SBC loaned Maxwell £55 million on the promise of security provided by a portfolio of Japanese shares which Maxwell instead sold. Kevin Maxwell was centrally involved in that transaction. Charges on that matter or on a sample transaction where pension fund investments were stolen, such as the Teva Pharmaceutical shares, would silence the critics and provide time for completion of the more detailed inquiries here and in the secrecy havens into the Mirror Group Newspapers and pension fund plundering and the Maxwell Communication and MGN market support operations.

A similar approach was adopted in the Guinness scandal when Ernest Saunders was charged with destroying company documents months before the more substantial charges over the market support operation were unleashed.

However the SFO response may not be helped by the track record of the two men most responsible for the Maxwell investigation. SFO director George Staple is a City solicitor steeped in the ponderous "time and money no object" civil litigation approach of climbing every mountain. Case controller John Tate takes a similar line and did not exactly have a result with his last outing, Barlow Clowes. There the SFO arrested seven, tried four, convicted only two (one being Peter Clowes who no jury was going to acquit), lost one before trial and passed on two more. England expects a far better result on Maxwell.

MEANWHILE the fiction about the offshore Maxwell trusts and foundations which control assets and may also still control cash should be seen for what it is. The assorted lawyers in Switzerland and Liechtenstein are merely responding to instructions left by Cap'n Rob.

Such entities usually have a structure which guides the trustees as to from whom they are to take instructions once the settlor/protector/controller (ie Maxwell) is dead. The trustees are never free agents. They know who to respond to and for whom they are working as beneficiaries.

The Maxwell Charitable Foundation and its offshore ilk will have been run since his death by his family and their associates outside Britain to whom the trustees report.

One more reason for the SFO to use its Section Two powers to question the brothers.

ONE MAN who will not be at all pleased by the decision to have the DTI probe the MGN flotation will be "Sir" Michael Richardson of brokers Smith New Court.

Richardson was a long time Maxwell ally who overcame the resistance of Smith New Court's major shareholder, merchant bankers N.M. Rothschild, equally longtime Maxwell opponents, to any involvement. The resulting fiasco over the failure to prevent Maxwell pillaging the supposedly ring-fenced MGN of £97 million is hardly Richardson's finest hour.

Such are the Rothschild red faces that it may be difficult for him to survive a second DTI appearance over Maxwell. He had to give evidence more than 20 years ago in the original DTI report which should have forever made Maxwell *persona non grata* in the City but for the big fee greed of those like Michael Richardson who thought they knew better.

ATTEMPTS are being made within MGN to persuade discredited finance director and pension fund trustee Lawrence Guest to stand down. Guest is due to face reelection at the forthcoming shareholders' meeting.

After his pathetic performance before the Commons select committee, where Guest admitted doing nothing to hinder, never mind stop, Cap'n Rob even though chairman of the pension fund's investment committee, he is unlikely to find many backers among MGN shareholders.

Some of Guest's co-directors are hoping that he will save embarrassment and resign. But backed by chairman Ernest Burrington and the tight little circle who now run MGN (a circle which, Maxwell-style, excludes other directors from certain information) Guest appears to see no reason why the shareholders should not feel confident in his continued highly-paid presence. If so then the MGN meeting could be even more riotous than it is expected to be.

WHILE awaiting trial on fraud charges, former insurance super-salesman Roger Levitt is adopting an unusual way of conducting the business of finding somewhere new to live now that creditors are forcing the sale of his Hampstead mansion. His wife makes approaches to possible sellers of any likely des. res. using the name of "Mrs Stein". However, vendors are assured by the agents acting for Levitt/Stein that the bankrupt bow-tied one has funds available from "impeccable" sources.

THE SUDDEN exit last month of Peter Hogarth after only a year as managing director of the Stock Exchange's trading markets division came as no surprise to those who knew him at brokers Societé Générale Strauss Turnbull.

Hogarth, formerly at accountants Peat Marwick, was held to have presided as chief executive over a number of highly expensive policies which had been less than successful. So much so that the £150,000 a year Stock Exchange post came at a most propitious time. Indeed so underwhelmed by his talents as a manager were certain of his colleagues that they advised the Stock Exchange against the appointment. Their advice was ignored — until last month.

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WANTED: SINGLE male n/s, 40-50, professional, intelligent graduate, well-read, creative, emotionally expressive and enjoys the finer side of life. I am petite fair-haired female, slim, attractive. Photograph and phone number please. West London. Box 5896.

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LOVELY, PIANO-PLAYING Oxbridge girl (28) seeks like-minded man for genuine romance, London. Box 6496.

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HANDSOME SLIM divorced writer 49 seeks young slim curvaceous woman for uninhibited sex and other good things in life. Country home, Leicestershire. Photo guarantees reply. Box 6696.

LOOKING FOR A LITTLE adventure to take you out of that rut? I'm 36, male, married, professional, living in Herts, and looking for a discreet, fun liaison. Box 6096.

GRADUATE FEMALE, 46, rising from ashes insolvent but optimistic, seeks unattached male, Brighton area. Box 6796.

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SINGLE MALE, 34, 6', own hair, own teeth, own Ford, SE London, enjoys running, gigs, alternative cabaret, science. Seeks surprising, intelligent woman with a lively sense of fun and humour. This could be interesting. Box 6996.

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VERY GOOD LOOKING intelligent male 6'2", 50 but looks late 30s, seeks beautiful woman, South Wales and borders. Box 7296.

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EASY-GOING HIPPY 22 seeks similar or opposite for company on laid-back world tour of art galleries and bars. Box 7496.

CREATIVE LADY SOUGHT by professional Asian gent. Long-term prospects. Box 7596.

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FRIEND, CONFIDANTE wanted, Successful entrepreneur, 58, slim, 6', great sense of humour, good-looking, unhappily married, seeks friendship (initially) with affectionate lady 20-35, slim, attractive, with positive attitude. Rewards unlimited. Box 7796.

ATTRACTIVE HUMOROUS passionate man 36 desires similar woman. Box 7896.

DE BEAUVOIR seeks Sartre. Photo please. Box 7996.

MALE SEEKS lady for sexy fun! Photo please! Box 8096.

SINGLE ATTRACTIVE woman 31 graduate London-based seeks professional intelligent man for relaxed relationship. Box 8196.

ELEGANT, FEMININE continental lady, artistic, from cultured background, in her 40s, but now regrettably in reduced circumstances, seeks a caring, committed relationship with sincere, well-bred and financially secure gentleman, with good intellect, warm personality, who enjoys sharing and appreciates the finer things in life. You should be monogamous, with a great sense of humour and have no ties to ex-partners, but children welcome. No timewasters, please. 081 964 4770.

WANTED: KIND, occasionally witty, theatre and book-loving male, for pretty Yorkshire graduate (31). Box 8296.

RICHARD: 40 slim n/s graduate liberal seeks partner. Box 8396.

HELP! PROFESSIONAL man, tall, slim, young 60, stifled by marriage, needs to meet n/s lady for discreet relationship. Somerset area. Box 8496.

ACTIVE DISCREET single male (45) seeks lady for mutually rewarding for Manchester/N.W. Box 8596.

PROFESSIONAL MALE 29 seeks intelligent slim attractive female for empathy, enjoyment and romance. Photo please. Response guaranteed. Surrey/London. Box 8696.

HAPPILY SINGLE professional woman, 33, dark, slim, amusing, seeks tall London man for indiscreet evening outings. Box 8796.

INEXPERIENCED MALE (31) seeks kind female for tuition/fun. Box 8896.

MALE, MID-THIRTIES, successful, unconventional, workaholic, archaeologist, seeks cultured, intelligent female who enjoys food and drink and trips to the country. Must have sense of humour. Box 8996.

MANCHESTER XX 28 seeks compatible XY to share jokes, music, hillwalking and other activities. Must be unattached and unscrewed-up. Box 9196.

ACADEMIC MALE 35 seeks tall heavyweight female wrestler, bodybuilder or similar for fun. Box 9096.

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BREAKFAST IN BELFAST! Hedonistic witty entrepreneur 30s seeks artistic nymph 20s for sensual adventure. Be a devil! Box 9296.

VERY ATTRACTIVE, intelligent, good-humoured blonde lady, early 40s, wishes to meet special man. I enjoy everything from country pubs to Claridges, Eastenders to Othello. Ideally you are 40+, London-based, successful, not married (!) and looking for an active yet caring woman to spend time with. ALA. Box 9396.

TALL SLIM attractive intelligent female, 26, seeks similar male who can make her laugh, melt her with his smile and knows his Chekhov and Berkoff. Box 9496.

DISABLED GUY, 41, unsteady walker, independent, unattached, seeks lady (disabled or otherwise) for physical relationship, perhaps more. SOH an advantage. Box 9596.

WITTY, SOLVENT attractive woman 39, interesting job and friends seeks male equivalent who's single, reliable, for serious liaison. Letter and telephone number. No Tories please. Londonish. Box 9696.

MALE UNDERGRAD, caring, attractive, dreamer, many other qualities — behind wall like Pink Floyd — seeking similar, Libra-compatible, empathic young female. Letters, photos. Herts, SE. Box 9796.

PRESENTABLE ECCENTRIC, 40s, seeks worldly mistress. Bristol. Box 9896.

EVIDENTLY ATTRACTIVE London gent, 33, successful, single, seeks fun-loving lady for romantic summer days, romantic summer nights, etc. whose age is less important than her lively personality. Box 9996.

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YEOVIL: MAN (30) seeking female friends. Box 10196.

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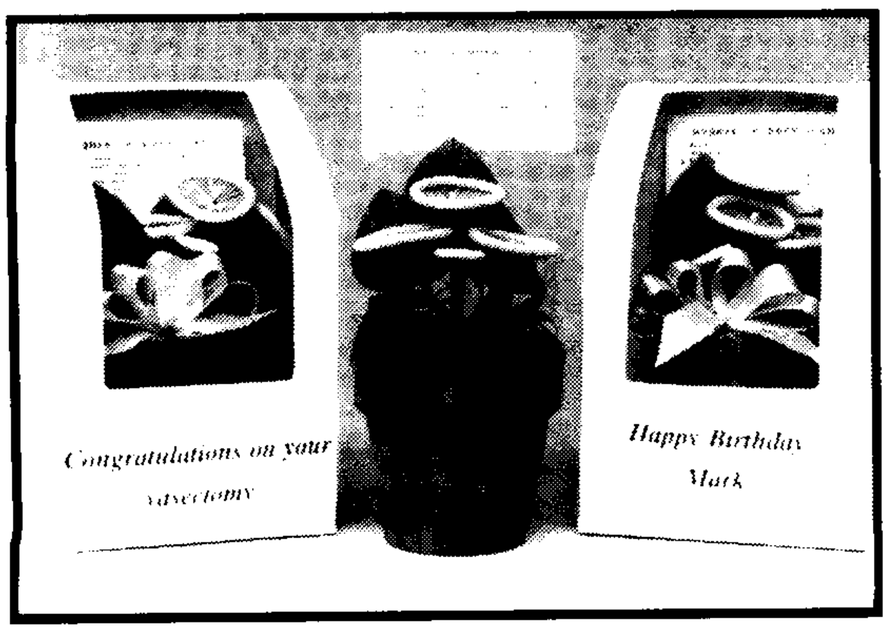

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ISSN 0032-888X

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Published by Pressdram Ltd, 6 Carlisle St, London W1V 5RG. 071-437 4017. Printed by East End Offset Ltd, Empson St, London E3 3LT. Distributed by P.E. Distribution, Mortimer Hse, 230/236 Lavender Hill, London SW11 1LE. 071-223 9971